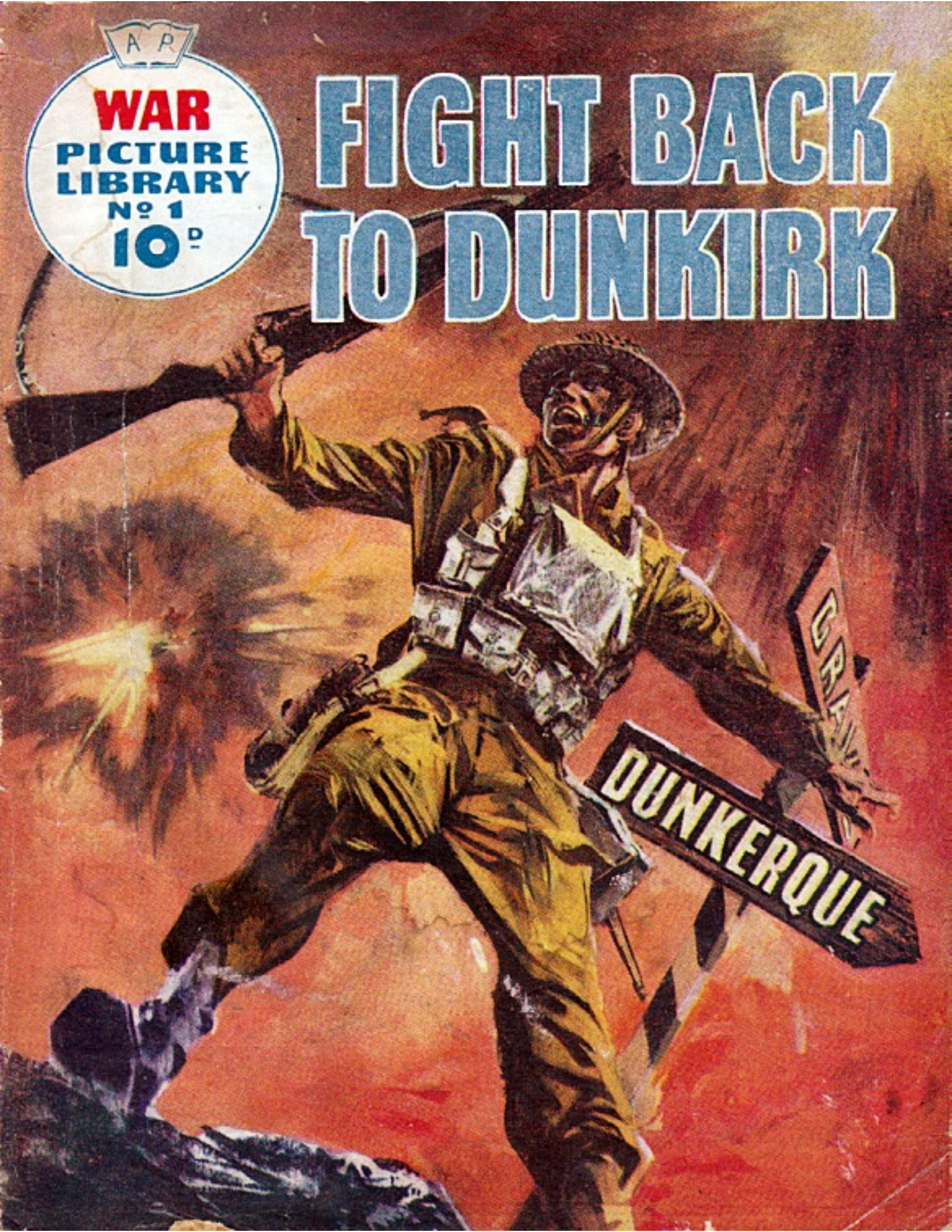
A P

WAR PICTURE LIBRARY

No 1

10D

FIGHT BACK TO DUNKIRK



ON SALE NOW! BUY YOUR COPY TODAY!

FIGHT BACK TO DUNKIRK

AT DAWN ON MAY 10TH., 1940, THE GREY-CLAD HORDES OF NAZI GERMANY SWARMED OVER THE FRONTIERS OF HOLLAND, BELGIUM AND LUXEMBOURG, AND THE FINAL BID FOR THE CONQUEST OF EUROPE BY THE POWER-CRAZED ADOLF HITLER HAD COMMENCED!

ONE HUNDRED HIGHLY-TRAINED GERMAN DIVISIONS WERE HURLED AT THE GALLANT DEFENDERS, AND IT NEEDED MORE THAN BRAVE HEARTS AND COURAGE TO WITHSTAND THE STEEL-CLAD MIGHT OF THE INVADERS...

© The Amalgamated Press, Ltd., 1958

Chapter 1. THE GRIM DEFENCE

THE GERMAN ARMY ROARED UNCHECKED THROUGH BELGIUM... AND THE BRITISH EXPEDITIONARY FORCE WAS HURRIEDLY ORDERED TO ADVANCE. A DESPERATE STRUGGLE ENSUED AGAINST THE OVERWHELMING MIGHT OF THE ENEMY AROUND THE TOWN OF LOUVAIN, ON THE RIVER DYLE....

TWO PLATOONS OF THE FORWARD COMPANY OF THE WESSEX REGIMENT PULLED BACK FROM THE BOMBED AND SHATTERED HOUSES, LEAVING LIEUTENANT HOWARD AND HIS MEN TO COVER THEIR WITHDRAWAL.
MY LEG! MY LEG! I'VE BEEN HIT!
OKAY, JIM... HANG ON TO ME. I'LL GET YOU OUT.

THE GERMANS HAD BROUGHT HEAVY GUNS INTO POSITION ON THE FAR SIDE OF THE RIVER AND A SAVAGE RAIN OF SHELLS WHINED AND EXPLODED AROUND THE COURAGEOUS PLATOON. LIEUTENANT HOWARD, A YOUNG FRESH-FACED OFFICER, CROUCHED BY THE FIELD TELEPHONE WITH HIS SERGEANT, DAVE GREEN. BESIDE HIM...
WE CAN'T HOLD OUT MUCH LONGER, SERGEANT. AS SOON AS CAPTAIN ANDERSON IS CLEAR, WE'LL HAVE TO PULL OUT!
IT'S DARNED TOUGH, SIR! ONCE THOSE HUNS GET ACROSS THE RIVER, THEY'LL BE ALL OVER US LIKE A SWARM OF HORNETS!

DAVE GREEN CREPT FORWARD WITH HIS BREN GUN TO GET A BETTER VIEW OF THE ENEMY. THEN A WHOLE SALVO OF SHELLS SMASHED INTO THE RUINS... AND THE OFFICER AND SIX OF THE MEN COLLAPSED, WOUNDED.

AAAAGH!

BY GLORY! THE LIEUTENANT'S COPPED A PACKET. STRETCHER BEARERS!

SERGEANT GREEN INSTANTLY TOOK COMMAND AND ORGANISED A PARTY OF MEN TO TAKE THE WOUNDED BACK. WHEN HE PICKED UP THE TELEPHONE, HE SAW THAT IT WAS SMASHED... NO FURTHER ORDERS COULD REACH THEM BY THAT MEANS!

GET THOSE MEN BACK TO THE FIRST AID POST AND TELL CAPTAIN ANDERSON THE REST OF US WILL BE COMING BACK WITHIN HALF AN HOUR. I'LL HOLD ON AS LONG AS POSSIBLE.

RIGHT, SARGE. GOOD LUCK!

STUKAS! LOOK OUT! THEY'RE GOING TO DIVE BOMB US!

IN A FIENDISH CHORUS OF SCREAMING WHINES, THE GERMAN DIVE BOMBERS HURTLED DOWN ON THE EDGE OF THE TOWN..... AND A SHOWER OF DEATH-DEALING BOMBS WAS UNLEASHED ON THE BATTERED BRITISH POSITIONS...

DAVE GREEN SAW THE BOMBS FALLING AND YELLED TO HIS HANDFUL OF MEN TO TAKE WHAT COVER THEY COULD... THEN HE DIVED INTO THE NEAREST SHELL HOLE, STILL CLUTCHING HIS BREN GUN.
PHEW! THIS IS GETTING TOO HOT FOR COMFORT!

ONE OF THE BOMBS EXPLODED JUST BEYOND THE SHELL HOLE WITH A SHATTERING ROAR. DAVE WAS PICKED UP LIKE A RAG DOLL AND FLUNG BACK...

THEIR MISSION COMPLETED, THE STUKAS CLIMBED UP INTO THE SKY AND ROARED OFF EASTWARDS... TEN MINUTES PASSED BEFORE DAVE GREEN RAISED HIS ACHING HEAD AND GOT GROGGILY TO HIS FEET. AS HE PULLED HIMSELF OUT OF THE SHELL HOLE, HE SAW THE GERMANS WERE ADVANCING...
THEY'RE OVER! NOTHING CAN STOP THOSE HUNS TAKING LOUVAIN NOW. NOTHING...

THE SERGEANT SHOUTED TO HIS MEN... BUT HIS VOICE ECHOED BACK TO HIM FROM THE WRECKED BUILDINGS. THERE WAS NO ANSWERING CALL... DAVE SEARCHED QUICKLY AND FOUND THE GRIM TRUTH...
KILLED... ALL OF THEM. THERE'S ONLY ME LEFT...

BITTER TEARS OF RAGE WELLED UP IN DAVE'S EYES. HE BRUSHED THEM ASIDE WITH A GRIMY HAND, THEN SEIZED HIS BREN GUN AND BEGAN FIRING STEADILY AT THE GERMANS CROSSING THE BRIDGE.
THIS IS THE LAST MAGAZINE ... BUT EVERY ROUND IS GOING TO FIND ITS MARK!

THE STUTTERING CRACK OF THE MACHINE GUN DIED AWAY AS THE LAST ROUND WAS FIRED. SERGEANT DAVE GREEN COULD DO NO MORE... TAKING THE BREECH BLOCK FROM THE BREN GUN, HE SWUNG ROUND AND WENT RACING AWAY THROUGH THE BOMBED AND SHELL-TORN WRECKAGE.
NO JERRY IS GOING TO TAKE ME PRISONER... IF I CAN'T GET BACK TO THE LADS, THEN I'LL GO DOWN FIGHTING. BUT I SWEAR THEY'LL NOT TAKE ME ... ALIVE!

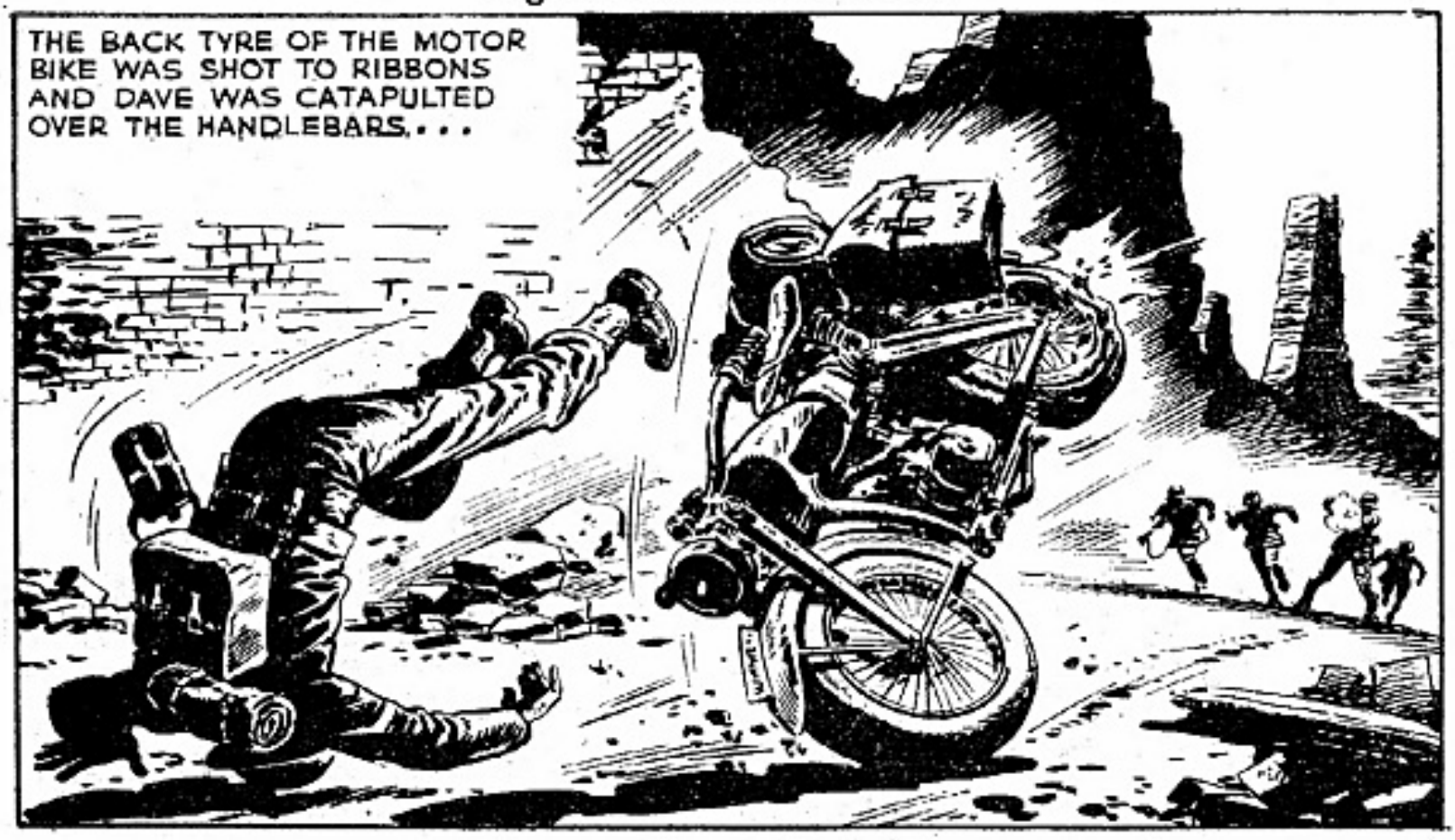
BUT TO HIS DISMAY, DAVE FOUND THAT THE ENEMY TROOPS HAD SENT ANOTHER SWIFT-MOVING COLUMN ROUND ON A FLANK... OF THE REGIMENT THERE WAS NO SIGN. THE WESSEX SERGEANT WAS CUT OFF! ALL THAT MORNING HE HID IN THE RUINS OF A BOMBED-OUT HOUSE, WATCHING THE GERMANS MOVING INTO LOUVAIN...

WEARY AND HUNGRY, DAVE LAY HIDDEN, WAITING HIS CHANCE TO ESCAPE.. IT WAS AROUND FOUR O'CLOCK WHEN A GERMAN DESPATCH RIDER SKIDDED TO A HALT OUTSIDE THE WRECKED BUILDING...
WHERE IS THE DIVISIONAL HEADQUARTERS? I CAN FIND NOBODY IN THIS MESS.
YOU'VE COME PAST IT. THEY'VE SET UP THEIR H.Q. IN THE UNIVERSITY, A MILE BACK DOWN THERE...

DAVE GREEN TOOK A DEEP BREATH... AND LEAPED OUT INTO SPACE!
HIMMEL!
OFF THAT BIKE, SQUAREHEAD... I WANT IT!
ACH! AN ACCURSED ENGLANDER!

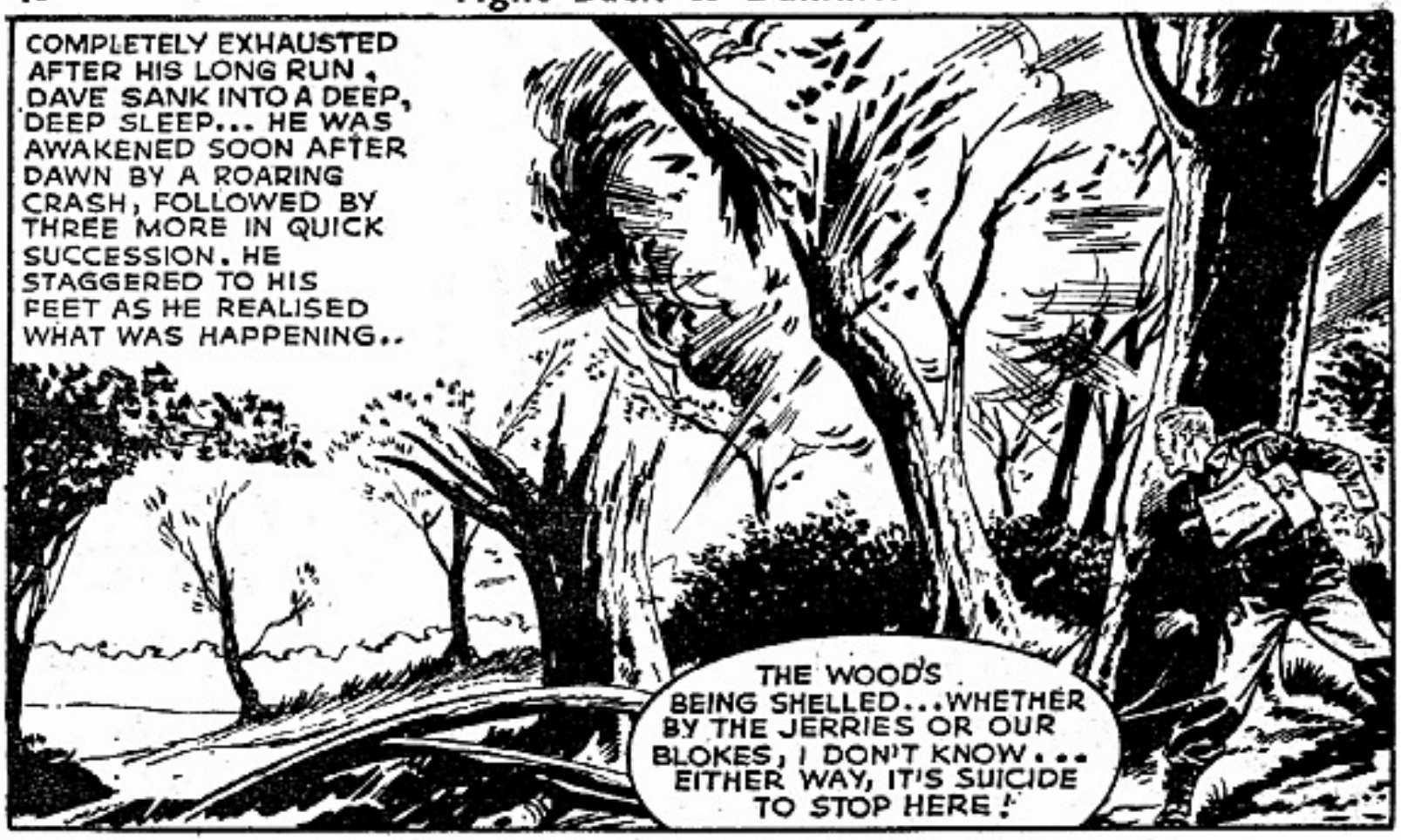
THE DESPATCH RIDER SPRAWLED IN THE MUD, GASPING. DAVE YANKED THE HEAVY BIKE ROUND, LEAPED ASTRIDE IT AND KICKED IT INTO GEAR. THE GERMAN PULLED OUT HIS MAUSER AND FIRED WILDLY AS THE BIKE WENT ROARING DOWN THE WRECKED STREET...
THANK HEAVENS THE JERRIES USE GOOD BIKES! WITH A BIT OF LUCK AND A FAIR WIND, I'LL GET RIGHT THROUGH THE TOWN AND OUT THE OTHER SIDE BEFORE ANYBODY CAN STOP ME!

BUT THE GOOD LUCK OF ONE MOMENT TURNED TO MISFORTUNE THE NEXT... FOR AS HE SLITHERED ROUND THE CORNER BY THE UNIVERSITY, A GERMAN OFFICER IN COMMAND OF A PATROL, SUDDENLY SAW DAVE AND NOTICED HIS BRITISH UNIFORM!
AN ENGLISH SOLDIER! SHOOT HIM! SHOOT HIM DOWN!

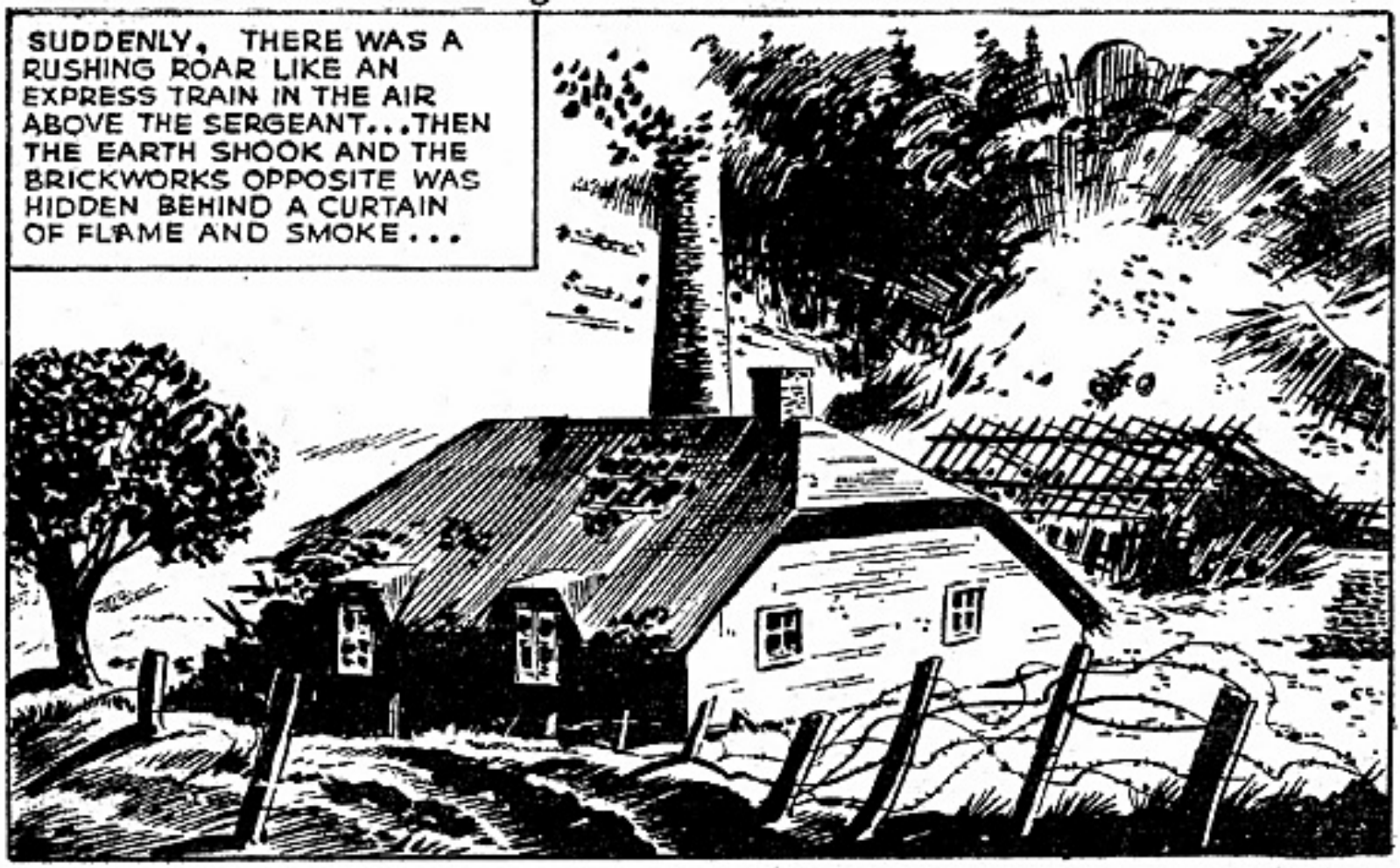

THE BACK TYRE OF THE MOTOR BIKE WAS SHOT TO RIBBONS AND DAVE WAS CATAPULTED OVER THE HANDLEBARS...

THE BULLETS PINGED ON THE ROAD ALL ROUND THE HALF-WINDED SERGEANT. HE HEARD THE CLATTER OF BOOTS AND THE HARSH YELLS OF THE GERMANS ... WITH A MIGHTY EFFORT OF WILL-POWER, DAVE FORCED HIMSELF TO HIS FEET... AND RAN!
I...I'LL BEAT YOU YET, YOU SQUAREHEADED HUNS!

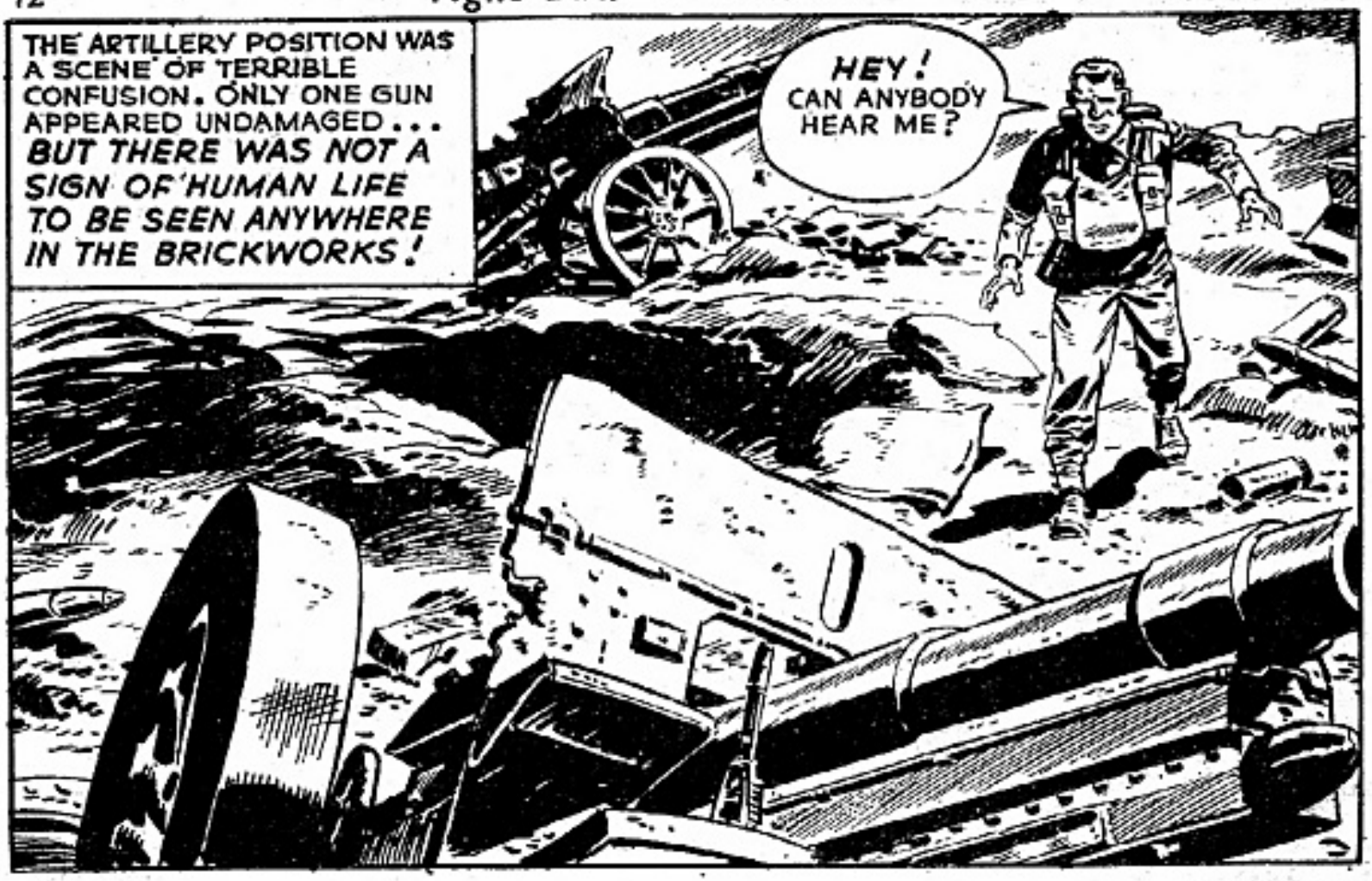
DODGING AND TWISTING LIKE A HARE, DAVE FINALLY GAVE THE GERMANS THE SLIP. HE CAME TO A THICK COPSE ON THE NORTH OF LOUVAIN AND FORCED HIS WAY THROUGH THE UNDERGROWTH. FOR THE TIME BEING HE WAS SAFE... HE SANK DOWN UNDER A BUSH.
BY GOLLY! I CAN'T RUN ANOTHER STEP. IT'LL BE DARK SOON... I'LL STAY HERE THE NIGHT AND PUSH ON EARLY TOMORROW. IT'S NO GOOD BLUNDERING AROUND IN THE DARK.


COMPLETELY EXHAUSTED AFTER HIS LONG RUN, DAVE SANK INTO A DEEP, DEEP SLEEP... HE WAS AWAKENED SOON AFTER DAWN BY A ROARING CRASH, FOLLOWED BY THREE MORE IN QUICK SUCCESSION. HE STAGGERED TO HIS FEET AS HE REALISED WHAT WAS HAPPENING..
THE WOOD'S BEING SHELLED...WHETHER BY THE JERRIES OR OUR BLOKES, I DON'T KNOW... EITHER WAY, IT'S SUICIDE TO STOP HERE!

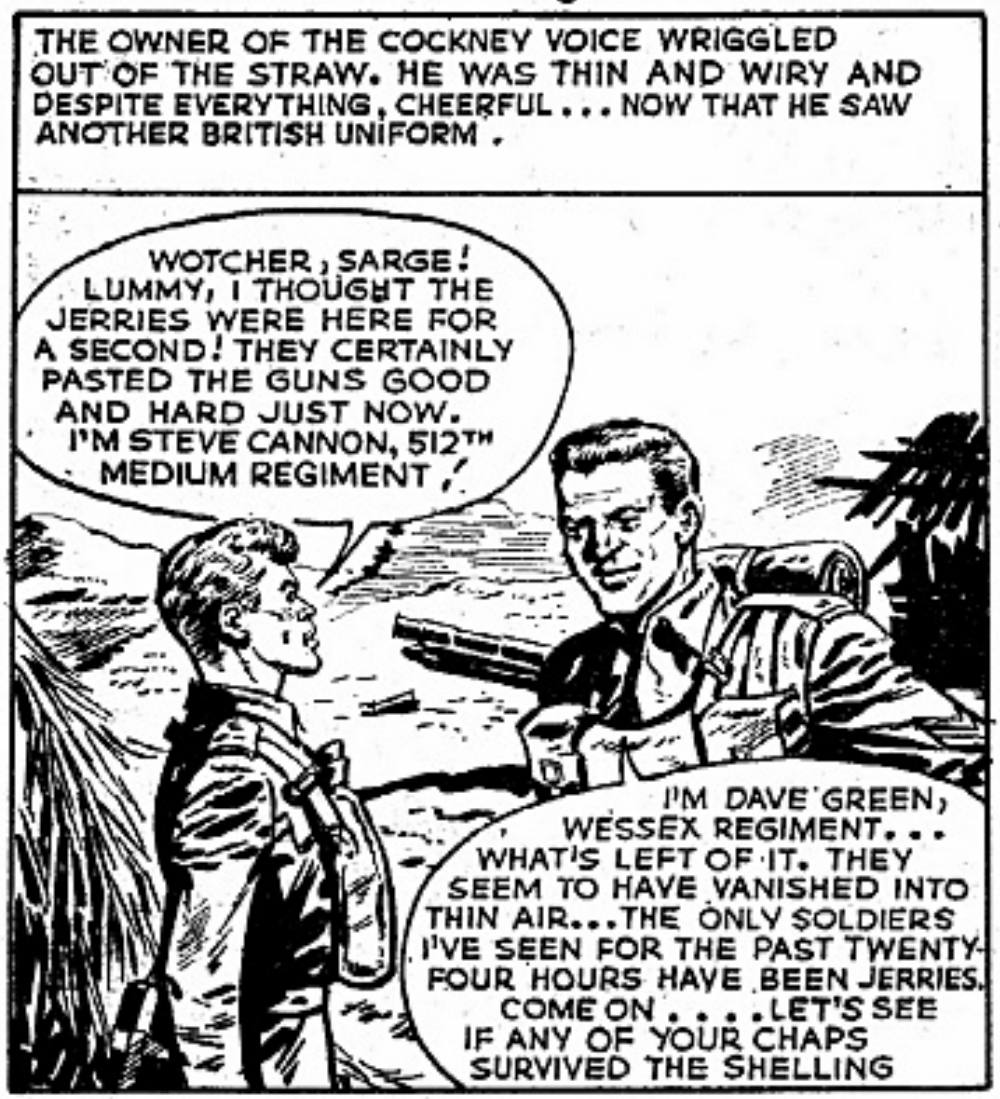
HE RAN THROUGH THE WOOD AS MORE SHELLS EXPLODED AROUND HIM AND CAME OUT ON THE FAR SIDE TO SEE A SMALL VILLAGE IN A HOLLOW. ABOVE IT WAS A BRICK WORKS AND THE SERGEANT SAW THE FLASH OF A GUN AS IT FIRED...
MEDIUM GUNS... AND OURS! THEY MUST BE A REARGUARD OF GUNNERS. SO OUR CHAPS CAN'T BE FAR AWAY... I'M IN LUCK!


SUDDENLY, THERE WAS A RUSHING ROAR LIKE AN EXPRESS TRAIN IN THE AIR ABOVE THE SERGEANT...THEN THE EARTH SHOOK AND THE BRICKWORKS OPPOSITE WAS HIDDEN BEHIND A CURTAIN OF FLAME AND SMOKE...

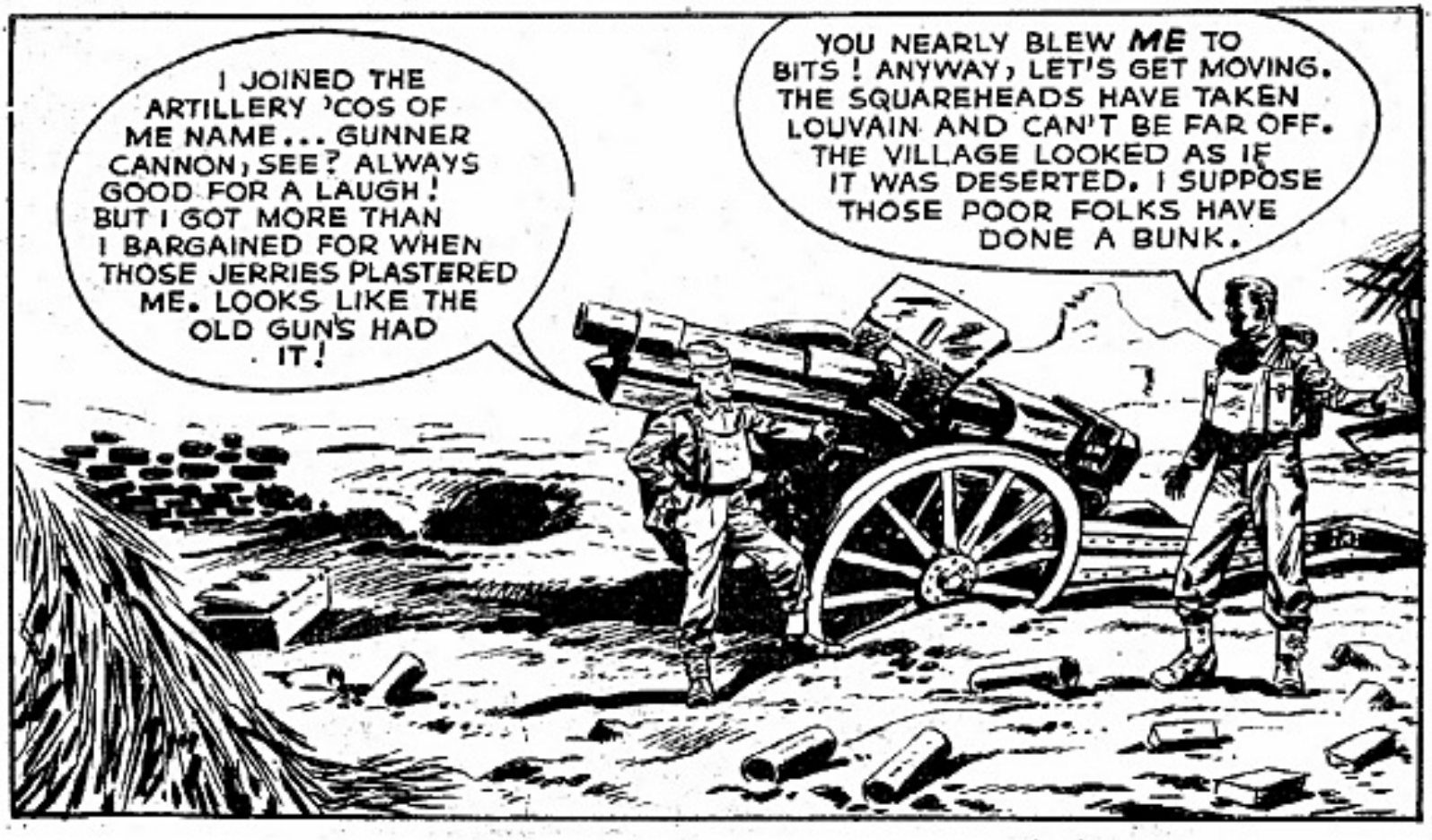
A GERMAN HEAVY GUN HAD SCORED A DIRECT HIT ON THE BRITISH GUNNERS AND AS THE SMOKE AND DUST SWIRLED UP IN THE WARM SPRING SUNSHINE, THE EERIE SILENCE THAT FOLLOWED WAS BROKEN BY A BLACKBIRD SINGING HIS FULL-THROATED SONG IN A NEARBY TREE. DAVE SHIVERED...
I MUST GET UP THERE AND SEE WHAT I CAN DO TO HELP THOSE POOR CHAPS. THEY BOUGHT A REAL PACKET! THE JERRIES MUST HAVE GOT THEIR BIG GUNS UP ALREADY!


THE ARTILLERY POSITION WAS A SCENE OF TERRIBLE CONFUSION. ONLY ONE GUN APPEARED UNDAMAGED... BUT THERE WAS NOT A SIGN OF HUMAN LIFE TO BE SEEN ANYWHERE IN THE BRICKWORKS!
HEY! CAN ANYBODY HEAR ME?

THEN, FROM BENEATH A PILE OF STRAW AT ONE SIDE, A SMALL SCARED FACE EMERGED WITH TWO ROUND STARING EYES. THE FACE WAS TOPPED BY A MASS OF FAIR, CURLY HAIR...
I'M 'ERE! WHO'S CALLING?


THE OWNER OF THE COCKNEY VOICE WRIGGLED OUT OF THE STRAW. HE WAS THIN AND WIRY AND DESPITE EVERYTHING, CHEERFUL . . . NOW THAT HE SAW ANOTHER BRITISH UNIFORM .
WOTCHER, SARGE! LUMMY, I THOUGHT THE JERRIES WERE HERE FOR A SECOND! THEY CERTAINLY PASTED THE GUNS GOOD AND HARD JUST NOW. I'M STEVE CANNON, 512TH MEDIUM REGIMENT!
I'M DAVE GREEN, WESSEX REGIMENT. . . WHAT'S LEFT OF IT. THEY SEEM TO HAVE VANISHED INTO THIN AIR...THE ONLY SOLDIERS I'VE SEEN FOR THE PAST TWENTY-FOUR HOURS HAVE BEEN JERRIES. COME ON . . . . LET'S SEE IF ANY OF YOUR CHAPS SURVIVED THE SHELLING

THE COCKNEY GUNNER THREW BACK HIS HEAD AND LAUGHED. . .
I SHOULDN'T BOTHER...THERE'S NOBODY HERE BUT ME. I'M THE MAJOR'S BATMAN. I WAS OUT FORAGING FOR A CHICKEN LAST NIGHT; WHEN I CAME BACK, EVERYBODY HAD GONE. MOST OF THE GUNS WERE OUT OF ACTION, BUT I FOUND ONE OF THEM STILL WORKED, SO I THOUGHT I'D BETTER USE UP THE AMMO FIRST!


I JOINED THE ARTILLERY 'COS OF ME NAME... GUNNER CANNON, SEE? ALWAYS GOOD FOR A LAUGH! BUT I GOT MORE THAN I BARGAINED FOR WHEN THOSE JERRIES PLASTERED ME. LOOKS LIKE THE OLD GUNS HAD IT!
YOU NEARLY BLEW ME TO BITS! ANYWAY, LET'S GET MOVING. THE SQUAREHEADS HAVE TAKEN LOUVAIN AND CAN'T BE FAR OFF. THE VILLAGE LOOKED AS IF IT WAS DESERTED. I SUPPOSE THOSE POOR FOLKS HAVE DONE A BUNK.

AS THE INFANTRY SERGEANT LOOKED DOWN THE HILL, HE SUDDENLY SAW A LINE OF LORRIES FILLED WITH GERMAN INFANTRYMEN SNAKING DOWN THE LANE TOWARDS THE BELGIAN VILLAGE.
HERE'S A CHANCE TOO GOOD TO MISS! LET'S GET THE GUN ON ITS WHEELS AND SEE IF IT WILL STILL FIRE.
OKAY! I OWE THEM JERRIES SOMETHING. THERE'S A FEW SHELLS LEFT AND THE GUN MAY NOT BE AS BAD AS IT LOOKS.

THEY STRAINED WITH ALL THEIR STRENGTH AND MANAGED TO GET THE GUN UPRIGHT. A QUICK EXAMINATION SHOWED IT WAS STILL IN WORKING ORDER. THEY SWUNG THE MUZZLE ROUND AND AIMED IT DOWN TOWARDS THE LANE. THE GUN WAS QUICKLY LOADED WITH SHELL AND CHARGE, AND THE LITTLE GUNNER PULLED THE LANYARD . . .
AND THE BEST OF BRITISH LUCK, JERRIES! FIRE!

AGAIN AND AGAIN THEY FIRED, POURING SHELL AFTER SHELL INTO THE GERMANS, WHO PULLED UP IN CONFUSION. FOUR LORRIES BURST INTO FLAMES AND GREASY BLACK SMOKE CURLED UP INTO THE SKY ABOVE THE VALLEY...
ACHTUNG! THE GUNS IN THE BRICKWORKS ARE STILL FIRING! WE ARE PINNED DOWN AND CAN'T MOVE. RANGE ON THEM AGAIN WITH THE HEAVY GUNS. HURRY!

WITHIN A FEW MINUTES, HIGH EXPLOSIVE SHELLS BEGAN TO BURST WITH SAVAGE FURY AROUND THE BATTERY POSITION AND THE AIR WAS FILLED WITH JAGGED LUMPS OF LETHAL STEEL. SERGEANT GREEN AND THE LITTLE GUNNER KNEW THEY COULD NOT SURVIVE THAT CONCENTRATION OF FIRE FOR LONG...
RIGHT, SARGE. HALF-A-TICK!
QUICK... I SAW A BOX OF GRENADES BEHIND THE BIG BRICK STACK. GET ONE AND SHOVE IT DOWN THE BARREL. THIS IS THE LAST ROUND... AND WE'RE NOT GOING TO LEAVE THE GUN FOR THE JERRIES.

THEY LOADED THE GUN WITH THE LAST ROUND, SLIPPED A GRENADE DOWN THE BARREL AND THEN BLOCKED IT WITH A HANDFUL OF MUD. DAVE TIED A LONG PIECE OF ROPE TO THE LANYARD, THEN THEY BOTH RACED BACK TO THE COVER OF THE NEAREST PILE OF BRICKS. STEVE HEAVED ON THE ROPE....

AS THE ECHOES OF THE TREMENDOUS ROAR DIED AWAY, DAVE GREEN PULLED STEVE'S ARM AND THEY BOTH LEAPED UP AND RAN...

LET'S GO, PAL. WE'VE OUTSTAYED OUR WELCOME!

YEAH! BUT I RECKON WE'VE HELD UP THAT COLUMN FOR QUITE A WHILE. NICE GOING, SARGE!

Chapter 2. THE GERMAN PATROL

SERGEANT GREEN KNEW THE WAY TO THE COAST LAY TO THE WEST AND THEY WOULD HAVE TO CROSS FIVE RIVERS ... EACH ONE A MAJOR OBSTACLE. THE SOUNDS OF DISTANT FIRING RUMBLED ALL ROUND THEM, BUT THEY REACHED THE RIVER SENNE WITHOUT MEETING ANY TROOPS, GERMAN OR BRITISH.

THE ROAD ON THE OTHER SIDE WAS CHOKED BY A LONG COLUMN OF BURNED-OUT AND WRECKED LORRIES... SILENT EVIDENCE OF A RUTHLESS ATTACK BY GERMAN DIVE BOMBERS.
COR LUMMY! JUST LOOK AT THIS LOT! THE BLOKES IN THESE TRUCKS MUST HAVE HAD A ROUGH TIME, SARGE!
THE JERRIES CAUGHT THEM JUST AS THEY GOT OVER THE BRIDGE. POOR DEVILS! THE SURVIVORS MUST HAVE ABANDONED THE TRUCKS AND GONE ON FOOT.

TWICE THAT DAY THEY WERE FORCED TO TAKE COVER IN WOODS TO AVOID COLUMNS OF GERMAN TANKS WHICH CAME ROARING UP FROM BEHIND THEM. THE ENEMY TROOPS SEEMED TO BE EVERYWHERE. IT WAS EARLY EVENING WHEN SERGEANT GREEN AND STEVE CANNON CAME TO THE NEXT RIVER, THE DENDRE... AND FOUND THE BRIDGE BROKEN AND TWISTED...
WE'RE OUT OF LUCK HERE, STEVE. WE'LL HAVE TO TRY AND FIND SOMETHING TO MAKE A RAFT TO GET ACROSS.
LOOK... THERE'S A HUT IN THAT GARDEN. HOW ABOUT USING SOME OF ITS TIMBERS, SARGE?

QUICKLY THEY RIPPED THE WOODEN TOOLSHED APART, PULLED A SECTION DOWN TO THE WATER'S EDGE AND STEPPED GINGERLY ON TO IT...

WHOOPS! STEADY, SARGE... OR YOU'LL MAKE ME SEASICK. I NEVER WAS MUCH OF A SAILOR. EVERY TIME I HEAR THE TUNE, *A LIFE ON THE OCEAN WAVE*, IT MAKES ME TURN GREEN!

YOU JUST STAY STILL AND BE QUIET! WE'LL GET ACROSS... UNLESS ANY JERRIES SPOT US!

BUT THEY REACHED THE OTHER SIDE OF THE RIVER SAFELY. THE SMALL, SHELL-TORN VILLAGE A MILE FURTHER ON WAS DESERTED, SILENT AND EERIE. THE ONLY SOUND CAME FROM THE CRUNCHING OF THEIR BOOTS ON THE ROAD.

IT'S SURPRISED ME THAT WE COULD HAVE GOT SO FAR AND NOT MET ANYONE. EVERYBODY MUST HAVE FLED AS SOON AS OUR TROOPS STARTED MOVING BACK.

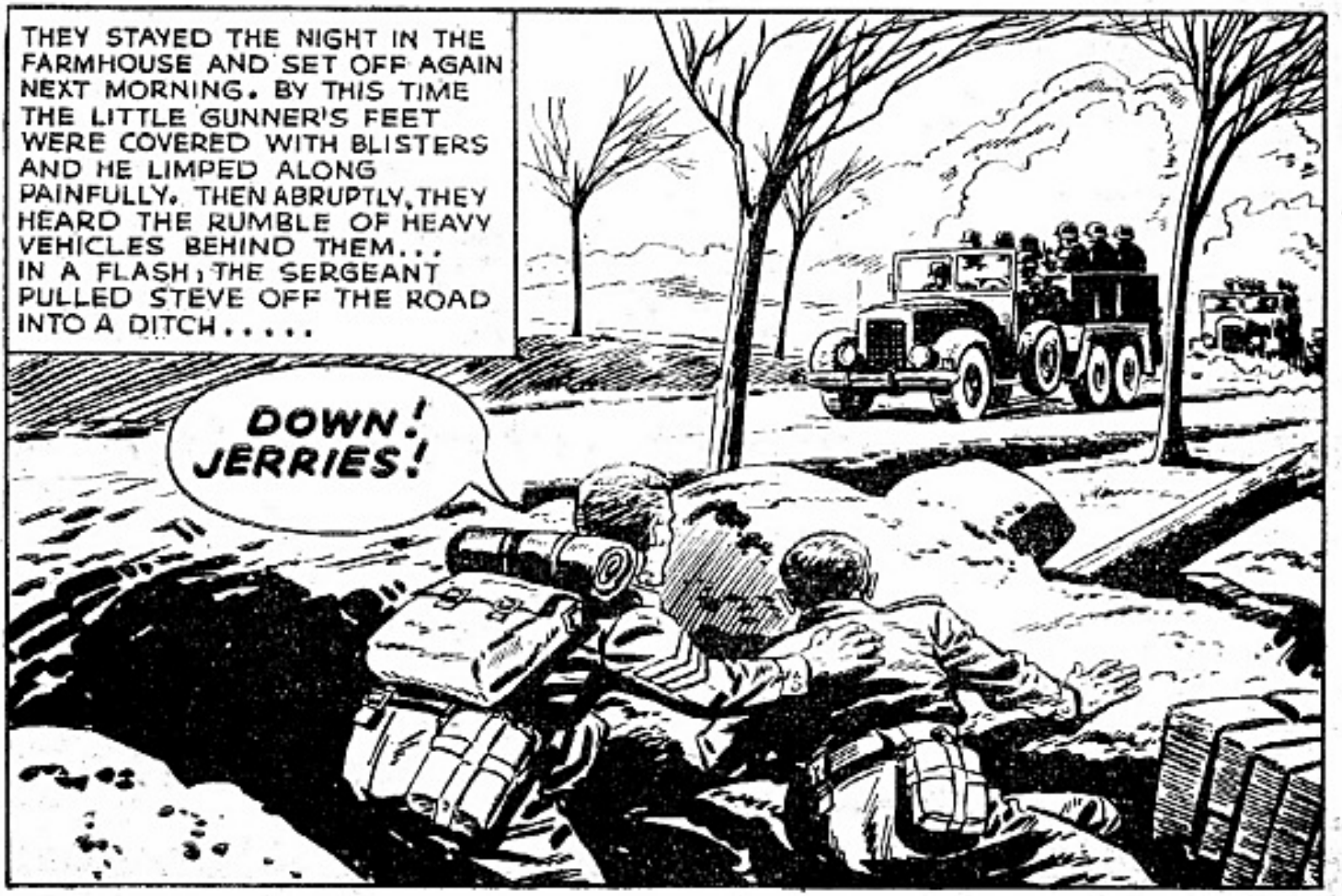
I ONLY HOPE THEY DIDN'T TAKE ALL THEIR GRUB WITH 'EM. I COULD EAT MY BOOTLACES, I'M SO HUNGRY. HOW ABOUT LOOKING FOR SOMETHING, SARGE?

THERE WAS A FARM AT THE END OF THE VILLAGE AND SEVERAL COWS WERE IN THE YARD. CHICKENS SCRATCHED IN THE HOT DUST, SEARCHING FOR GRAINS OF FOOD. THE COCKNEY GUNNER'S EYES LIT UP AND HE SMACKED HIS LIPS WHEN HE SAW THEM....

LOVELY GRUB! I DON'T KNOW WHICH CAME FIRST, THE CHICKEN OR THE EGG... BUT IF THEM HENS HAS LAID ANY, WE'RE GOING TO EAT, DAVE. COME ON!

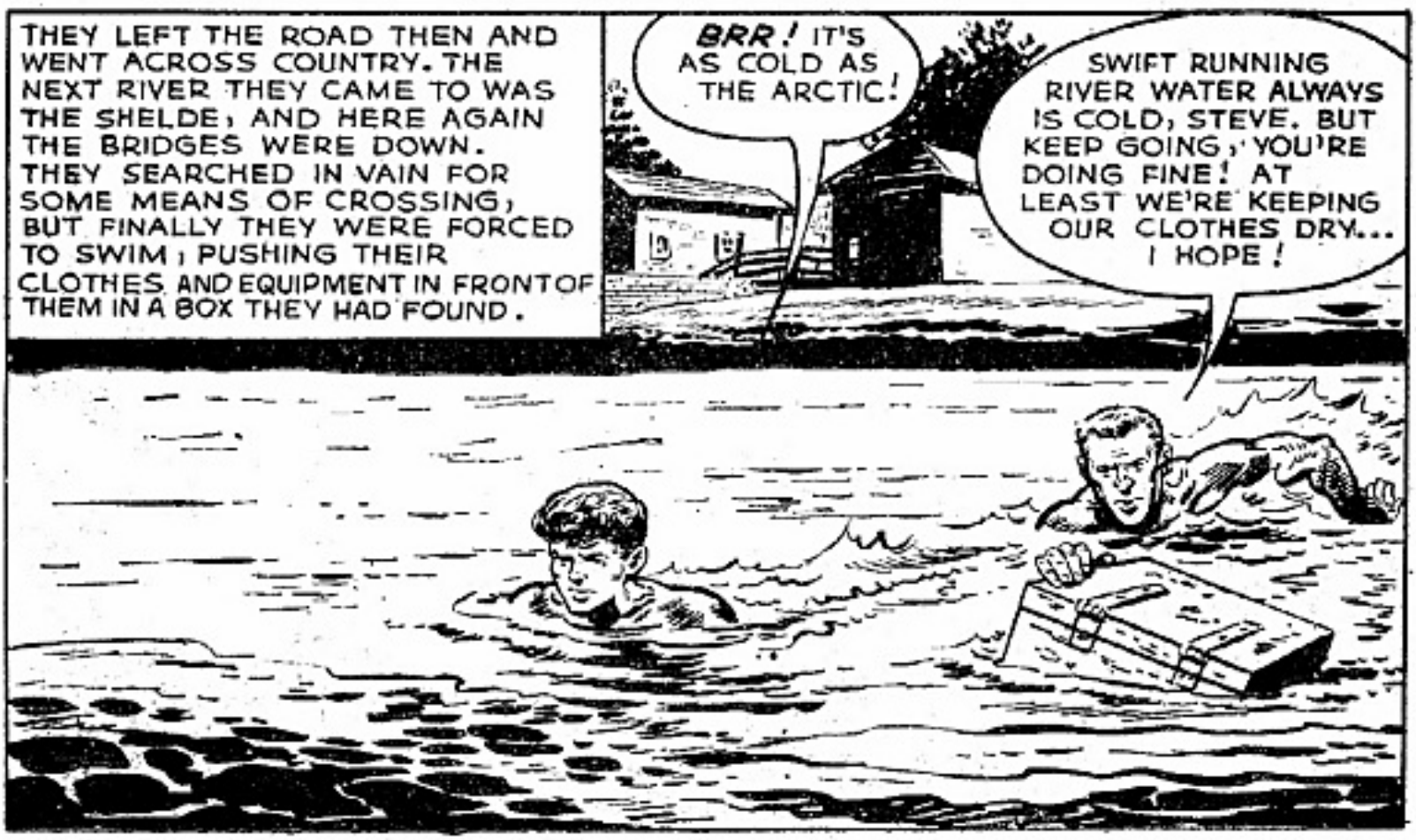
ALL RIGHT... YOU SEARCH AROUND FOR EGGS. I KNOW SOMETHING ABOUT MILKING. AS LONG AS THOSE COWS AREN'T TOO FIERCE, WE'LL HAVE SOME MILK AS WELL!

TWENTY MINUTES LATER, THEY WERE BOTH SITTING DOWN IN THE FARMHOUSE TO A HUGE PLATE OF FRIED EGGS WASHED DOWN BY DRAUGHTS OF RICH, CREAMY MILK. STEVE CANNON SIGHED HAPPILY...
HEIGH-HO! MY MA ALWAYS TOLD ME THE MILK WE GOT IN BOTTLES AT HOME WAS NOTHING LIKE THE REAL STUFF. NOW I KNOW! BUT HOW DID YOU GET THEM GREAT BRUTES OF COWS TO PART WITH IT?
AH! THAT'S A TRADE SECRET, MY TOWNY FRIEND! BUT IT CERTAINLY IS GOOD!


THEY STAYED THE NIGHT IN THE FARMHOUSE AND SET OFF AGAIN NEXT MORNING. BY THIS TIME THE LITTLE GUNNER'S FEET WERE COVERED WITH BLISTERS AND HE LIMPED ALONG PAINFULLY. THEN ABRUPTLY, THEY HEARD THE RUMBLE OF HEAVY VEHICLES BEHIND THEM... IN A FLASH, THE SERGEANT PULLED STEVE OFF THE ROAD INTO A DITCH.....
DOWN! JERRIES!

THE LONG CONVOY OF GERMAN TRUCKS ROARED PAST THEM AS THEY CROUCHED IN THE DITCH, HOLDING THEIR BREATH.

THE LORRIES THUNDERED ON... THE TWO ENGLISHMEN LAY MOTIONLESS FOR A FEW MINUTES BEFORE GETTING TO THEIR FEET, CHOKING AND GASPING... BUT GRINNING THEIR RELIEF.
BLOOMIN' SQUAREHEADS! JUST LOOK AT MY BATTLE-DRESS. AND TO THINK I USED TO BE THE SMARTEST BLOKE IN THE BATTERY!


THEY LEFT THE ROAD THEN AND WENT ACROSS COUNTRY. THE NEXT RIVER THEY CAME TO WAS THE SHELDE, AND HERE AGAIN THE BRIDGES WERE DOWN. THEY SEARCHED IN VAIN FOR SOME MEANS OF CROSSING, BUT FINALLY THEY WERE FORCED TO SWIM, PUSHING THEIR CLOTHES AND EQUIPMENT IN FRONT OF THEM IN A BOX THEY HAD FOUND.
BRR! IT'S AS COLD AS THE ARCTIC!
SWIFT RUNNING RIVER WATER ALWAYS IS COLD, STEVE. BUT KEEP GOING, YOU'RE DOING FINE! AT LEAST WE'RE KEEPING OUR CLOTHES DRY... I HOPE!

THE WESSEX SERGEANT DRAGGED HIS SHIVERING COMRADE ASHORE. THEY DRIED THEMSELVES WITH HANDFULS OF GRASS, DONNED THEIR CLOTHES AND MOVED OFF AGAIN. AT ABOUT NOON, THEY FOUND A SMALL COTTAGE ON THE EDGE OF A WOOD AND APPROACHED IT CAUTIOUSLY...
WONDER IF WE CAN GET ANY GRUB HERE, DAVE? I'M STARVING AGAIN!
WE CAN TRY... BUT WATCH OUT FOR ANY HUNS. WE DON'T KNOW WHERE THEY ARE.

AS THEY DREW NEARER, THEY HEARD THE LOW MURMUR OF VOICES. DAVE GREEN LOOKED CAREFULLY ROUND THE WINDOW...
BY GLORY! A JERRY PATROL! THEY'RE WRECKING THE PLACE...

THERE WAS A RIFLE LEANING AGAINST THE WALL JUST UNDER THE WINDOW. SLOWLY, WITH EVERY NERVE TENSED, DAVE REACHED IN AND TOOK HOLD OF THE BARREL....
ACH! THESE PEASANTS FEED WELL, HANS. IT WAS A GOOD IDEA OF YOURS TO SEARCH THIS PLACE BEFORE WE JOINED UP WITH THE OTHERS.

A FEW MOMENTS LATER, THE FRONT DOOR OF THE COTTAGE BURST INWARDS... AND THE GRIM FIGURE OF SERGEANT DAVE GREEN STOOD THERE, RIFLE IN HAND....
GET YOUR HANDS UP, YOU SQUAREHEADS! QUICK!
AAH! A BRITISHER! AND HE'S GOT MY RIFLE!

THE FELDWEBEL IN CHARGE OF THE PATROL MADE A GRAB FOR THE PISTOL AT HIS WAIST... DAVE FIRED AND THE ENEMY SOLDIER FELL BACK WITH A YELL; A BULLET IN HIS ARM...
NO, YOU DON'T...
AAAAAGH!

AT A CRISP COMMAND FROM DAVE, THE LITTLE GUNNER DASHED INTO THE ROOM. HE COLLECTED THE GERMANS' WEAPONS WHILE DAVE KEPT THEM IN LINE AGAINST THE WALL.
PILE THEIR ARMS IN A HEAP, STEVE. THEN WE'LL TAKE OUR PICK. THERE'S A WELL OUTSIDE...THE THINGS WE DON'T WANT CAN GO IN THERE. NIP INTO THE BEDROOM AND SEE IF YOU CAN FIND A SHEET... WE'LL USE THAT TO TIE UP THIS BUNCH.
OKAY, SARGE. LEAVE IT TO ME!

THE GERMANS WERE SOON BOUND HAND AND FOOT .. DAVE BANDAGED THE FELDWEBEL'S WOUNDED ARM AND THEN THE TWO TOMMIES HELPED THEMSELVES TO THE FOOD.
IT'LL BE A LONG WHILE BEFORE THESE HUNS ARE FOUND. AT LEAST WE'VE MANAGED TO PUT A FEW OF THEM OUT OF ACTION!
YEP! AND I'M GOING TO TAKE THAT MACHINE-PISTOL. I'LL FEEL MUCH HAPPIER WITH SOMETHING TO FIGHT BACK WITH. COR! THIS SAUSAGE IS GOOD!

DAVE TOOK THE FELDWEBEL'S MAUSER AND STEVE THE DEADLY MACHINE-PISTOL. AFTER HURLING THE REST OF THE GUNS DOWN THE WELL OUTSIDE, THEY LEFT THE FURIOUS GERMANS HELPLESS AND RAN.
LET'S GO! AND WOE BETIDE ANY HUNS WE BUMP INTO NOW!
WITH THIS LITTLE BABY IN MY MITTS, I CAN EVEN STAND THE BLOOMIN' BLISTERS ON MY FEET!

SEVERAL HOURS LATER, THEY SAW ANOTHER RIVER GLEAMING IN THE HOT SUNLIGHT AHEAD OF THEM . . . AND A NARROW BRIDGE SPANNING OVER THE WATER, APPARENTLY INTACT!
LOOK... A BRIDGE...AND ALL IN ONE LUVERLY PIECE! COME ON, SARGE... WE WON'T GET OUR FEET WET THIS TIME.
IT MUST BE THE RIVER LYS. THEN THERE'S ONLY THE RIVER YSER IN FRONT OF US BEFORE WE HIT THE COAST.

AS THEY RACED DOWN THE HILL TO THE BRIDGE, DAVE SUDDENLY SAW A LONE FIGURE IN BATTLEDRESS BENDING OVER A SMALL BOX ON THE FAR SIDE OF THE RIVER . . . THE SERGEANT GAVE A SHOUT OF ALARM . . .
HE'S GOING TO BLOW UP THE BRIDGE! THAT'S A DETONATING BOX HE'S BENDING OVER.
HI! HI!

THE FIGURE BENDING OVER THE DETONATOR WAS A CORPORAL IN THE ROYAL ENGINEERS. HE SWUNG ROUND AND LOOKED UP AS HE HEARD THE SHOUTS AND THE POUNDING FEET ON THE BRIDGE....

OCH! TWO MORE OF OUR LADS!

THE TALL, RAWBONED SCOT STOOD UP AND WAITED FOR STEVE AND DAVE TO COME PANTING UP TO HIM....

PHEW! I THOUGHT YOU WERE JUST GOING TO BLOW UP THE BRIDGE, CORPORAL. WE DIDN'T FANCY SWIMMING ANOTHER RIVER. ARE YOU ALL ALONE?

AYE. BUT YE DINNA HAVE TO WORRY. I'VE GOT ANOTHER HOUR AFORE I SET OFF THE CHARGES. MY ORDERS ARE TO STAY HERE UNTIL FIFTEEN HUNDRED HOURS, SO ANY ODD LADDIES LIKE YOURSELVES CAN GET ACROSS!

THE CORPORAL TOLD THEM THAT PARTIES OF BOTH THEIR UNITS HAD CROSSED THE BRIDGE THE DAY BEFORE.

THEN WE'RE SOME WAY BEHIND OUR BLOKES. THERE'S A LOT OF JERRIES SWARMING AROUND BEHIND US, JOCK. I RECKON YOU OUGHT TO BLOW THE BRIDGE AT ANY TIME.

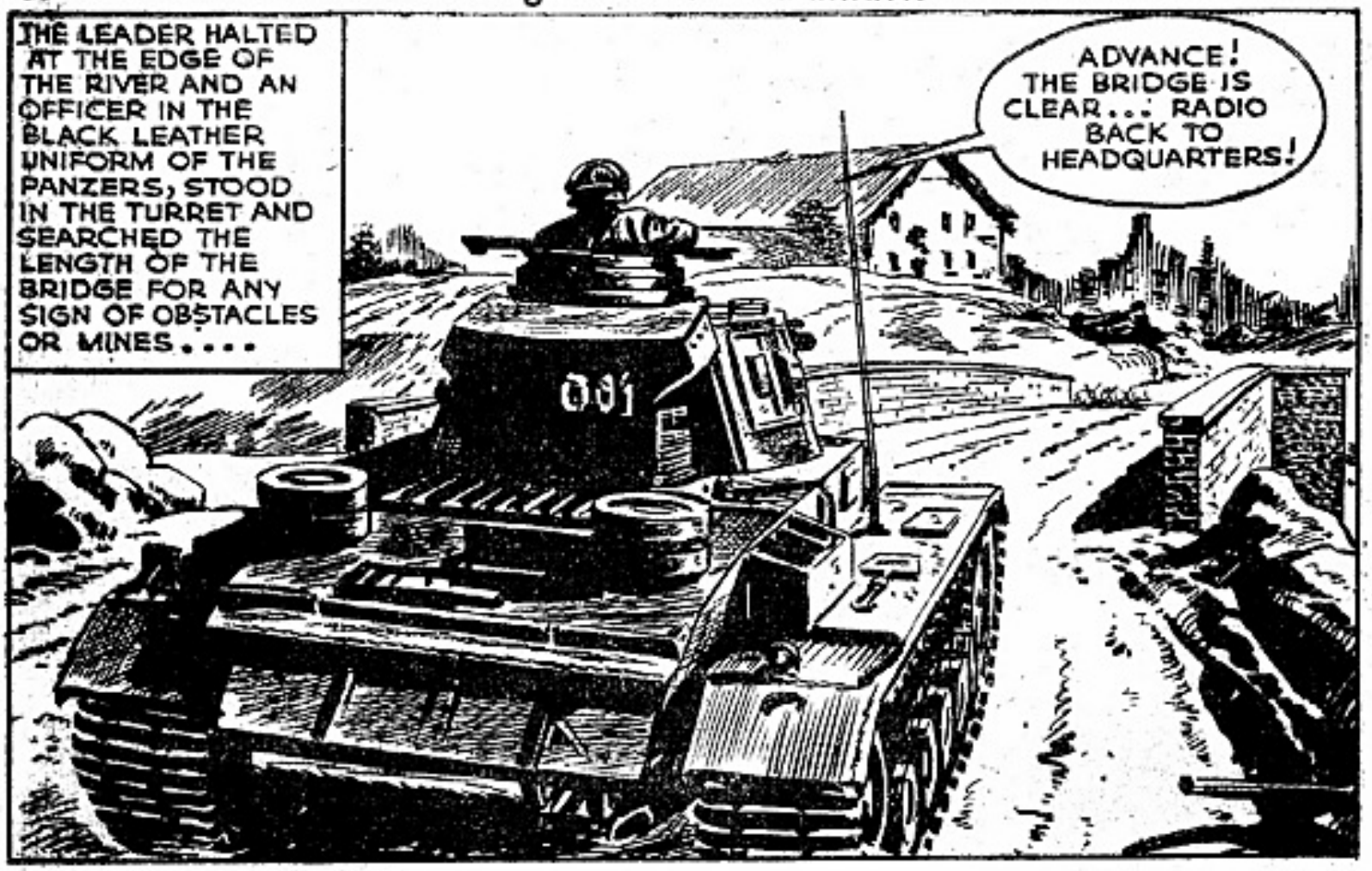
I HAE ME ORDERS. FIFTEEN HUNDRED HOURS AND NOT BEFORE. THEN I'M TO MAKE MY WAY TO THE YSER AND JOIN UP WITH MY COMPANY.

THE DOUR SCOTS CORPORAL WAS OBVIOUSLY NOT GOING TO TAKE ADVICE FROM SERGEANT GREEN! BUT DAVE KNEW THE ENEMY ARMOURED COLUMNS WERE NOT FAR OFF AND HE CLIMBED TO THE UPPER FLOOR OF A NEARBY BUILDING AND LOOKED OVER THE RIVER.
PANZERS! A MOB OF HEAVY TANKS, TOO! WE GOT TO STOP 'EM CROSSING THE RIVER. I'LL HAVE TO USE MY RANK ON THAT CORPORAL!

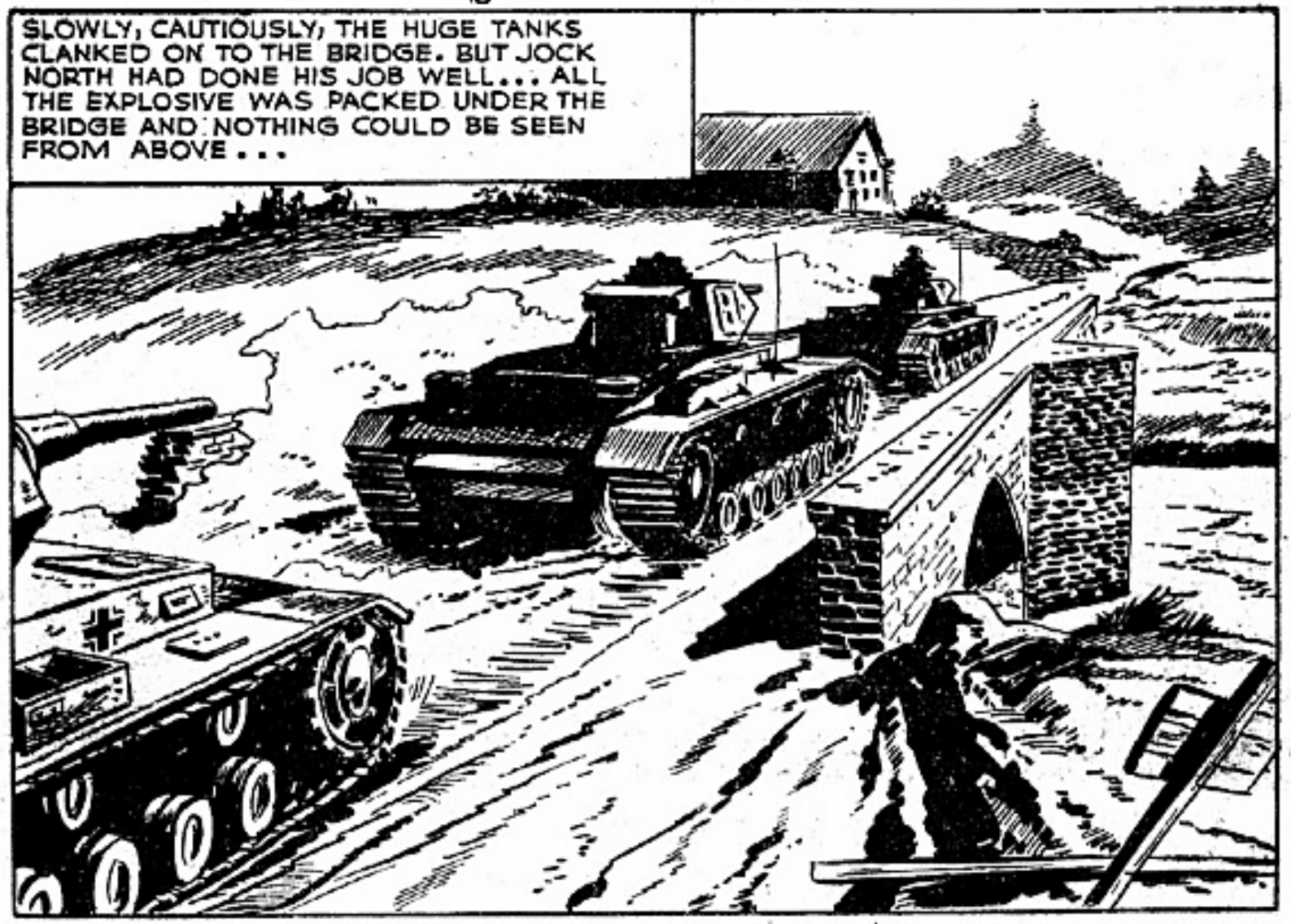
DAVE DASHED DOWN AND WENT RACING BACK TO JOCK NORTH AND STEVE....
THERE'S A WHOLE PANZER DIVISION COMING THIS WAY, MAKING STRAIGHT FOR THE BRIDGE! BLOW IT UP NOW, BEFORE THEY GET ACROSS! QUICK, MAN! THAT'S AN ORDER!
TANKS, EH? WELL, I DINNA TAKE ORDERS FROM NO FOOT-SLOGGING SERGEANT. BUT MAYBE THIS IS THE TIME TO USE WHAT THE OFFICERS CALL... INITIATIVE!

Chapter 3. A TRAP FOR THE NAZIS

WITH THE HARSH RUMBLING OF STEEL TRACKS AND THE DEEP-THROATED ROAR OF THEIR MIGHTY ENGINES, THE SPEARHEADS OF THE PANZER DIVISION NOSED STEADILY FORWARD TOWARDS THE BRIDGE ...


THE LEADER HALTED AT THE EDGE OF THE RIVER AND AN OFFICER IN THE BLACK LEATHER UNIFORM OF THE PANZERS, STOOD IN THE TURRET AND SEARCHED THE LENGTH OF THE BRIDGE FOR ANY SIGN OF OBSTACLES OR MINES....
ADVANCE! THE BRIDGE IS CLEAR... RADIO BACK TO HEADQUARTERS!

THE THREE SOLDIERS ON THE FAR SIDE OF THE BRIDGE CROUCHED DOWN BEHIND AN OVERTURNED CAR AND WAITED BREATHLESSLY. JOCK CROUCHED WITH HIS HANDS ON THE PLUNGER OF THE DETONATOR, AS DAVE WATCHED THE TANKS MOVING FORWARD.
CAN YE SEE THEM, SERGEANT?
SURE! THE FIRST ONE IS JUST CRAWLING ON TO THE BRIDGE. I'LL WAIT TILL THREE OF 'EM ARE ON, THEN I'LL GIVE YOU THE WORD.


SLOWLY, CAUTIOUSLY, THE HUGE TANKS CLANKED ON TO THE BRIDGE. BUT JOCK NORTH HAD DONE HIS JOB WELL... ALL THE EXPLOSIVE WAS PACKED UNDER THE BRIDGE AND NOTHING COULD BE SEEN FROM ABOVE...

SUDDENLY, DAVE RIPPED OUT ONE WORD....
NOW!

WHOOPING WITH DELIGHT, THE THREE BRITISHERS DANCED WITH JOY BEHIND THE OVERTURNED CAR . . .
YIPEEE! WE'VE DONE IT! COR! TALK ABOUT BONFIRE NIGHT.. I AIN'T NEVER SEEN A BLOW-UP LIKE THAT BEFORE!
THREE OF 'EM IN THE DRINK! AND THE OTHERS WON'T GET ACROSS WITHOUT BUILDING A PONTOON BRIDGE. WELL DONE, JOCK!
AYE! IT WAS A GUID WEE BANG!

BUT THE TRIO WERE SEEN BY THE FURIOUS GERMANS IN THE SURVIVING TANKS ON THE FAR BANK... NEXT INSTANT, A SAVAGE HAIL OF SMALL ARMS FIRE AND H.E SHELLS SCREAMED OVER THE RIVER. DAVE GREEN GAVE A MOAN... AND SANK TO THE GROUND, BLOOD OOZING FROM A WOUND ON THE SIDE OF HIS HEAD.
UUURGH!
SARGE! DAVEY BOY! HE'S WOUNDED... QUICK, HELP ME GET HIM UNDER COVER, JOCK.

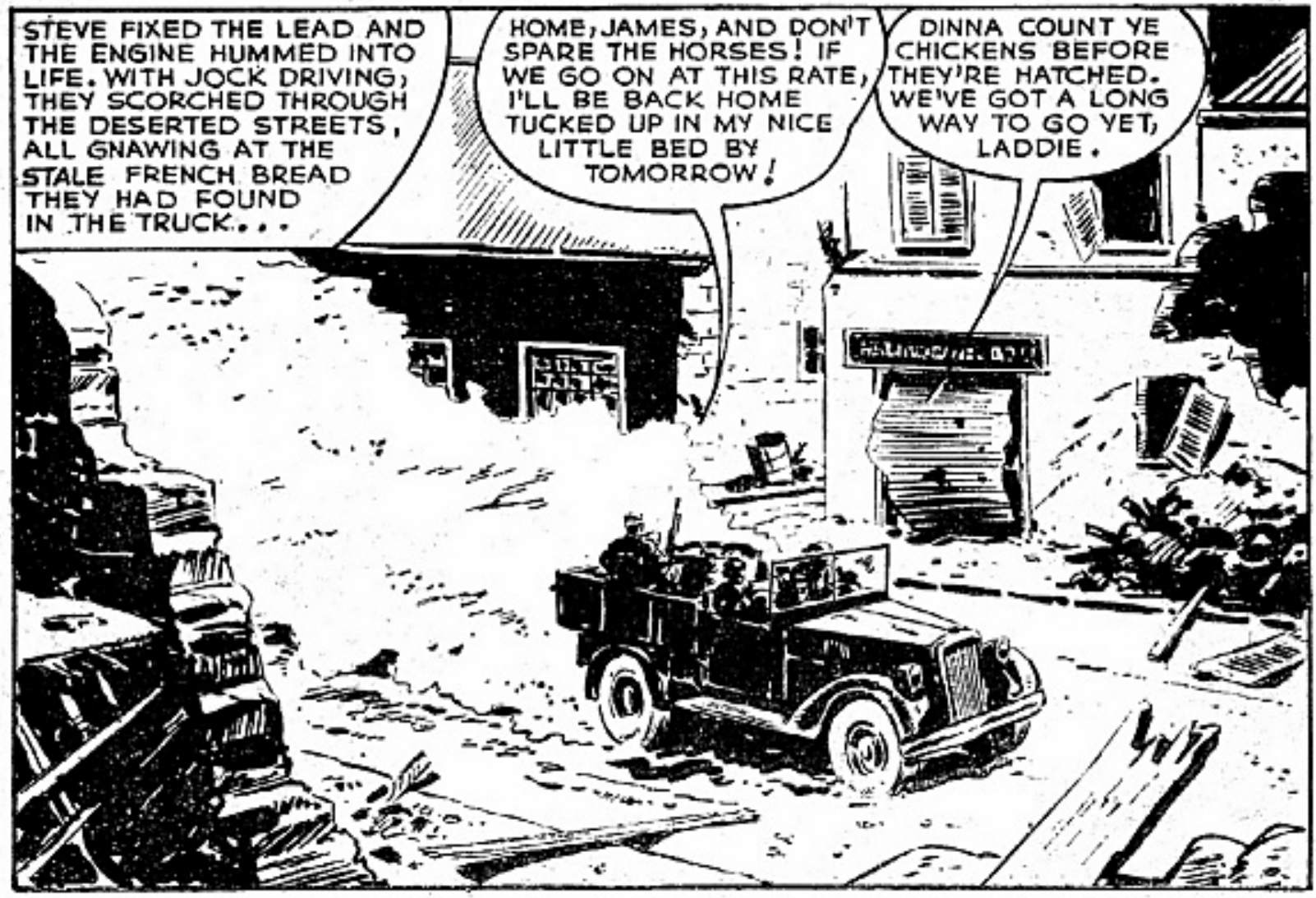
CORPORAL NORTH PICKED UP THE WOUNDED SERGEANT AND WITH STEVE FOLLOWING, HE RAN TOWARDS THE WAREHOUSE BEHIND THEM...

THEY REACHED THE WAREHOUSE SAFELY, BUT THE SHELLS WERE RIPPING THROUGH THE WALLS AS IF THEY WERE MADE OF PAPER SO DAVE GREEN, JOCK NORTH AND STEVE CANNON STAGGERED OUT OF THE BACK AND ACROSS A TRAIN DEPOT. THERE, IN A SHED, JOCK TENDED TO DAVE'S WOUND...
JOCK, LOOK! I'VE FOUND A BREN GUN AND SOME AMMO! NOW WE'VE REALLY GOT SOMETHING TO FIGHT BACK WITH!

THE SERGEANT'S WOUND WAS NOT SERIOUS
WHAT HAPPENED? OUCH! MY HEAD!
YOU COLLECTED A HUNK O' JERRY CANNON SHELL ON YOUR NAPPER, SARGE. BUT YOU MUST HAVE A THICK SKULL, 'COS IT ONLY SHAVED A BIT OF HAIR OFF!
OCH! YOU BLATHERING SASSENACH! IF IT HAD BEEN YOUR HEAD, IT WOULD HAVE DAMAGED THE SHELL SPLINTER!

THE TOUGH SERGEANT SOON FELT WELL ENOUGH TO STAND AND HE EXAMINED THE BREN GUN STEVE HAD DISCOVERED...
THIS IS QUITE A FIND, LADS. IF THERE'S ONE THING I KNOW HOW TO USE, IT'S A BREN! ALL WE WANT NOW IS SOME TRANSPORT TO GET US ON OUR WAY. I DON'T THINK I COULD WALK VERY FAR... MY HEAD'S GOT A TRIP HAMMER INSIDE IT!
LET'S SCOUT AROUND. WE MAY FIND SOMETHING OUTSIDE!

IN A SIDE STREET NEAR THE RAILWAY DEPOT, THEY FOUND AN ABANDONED BAKER'S TRUCK. THE TANK WAS FULL OF PETROL, BUT THE ENGINE REFUSED TO FIRE... UNTIL STEVE BURROWED INSIDE AND FOUND ONE OF THE LEADS FLAPPING LOOSE...
GOT IT! THERE AIN'T MUCH WRONG WITH THIS... APART FROM OLD AGE.
NICE WORK, STEVE!


STEVE FIXED THE LEAD AND THE ENGINE HUMMED INTO LIFE. WITH JOCK DRIVING, THEY SCORCHED THROUGH THE DESERTED STREETS, ALL GNAWING AT THE STALE FRENCH BREAD THEY HAD FOUND IN THE TRUCK...
HOME, JAMES, AND DON'T SPARE THE HORSES! IF WE GO ON AT THIS RATE, I'LL BE BACK HOME TUCKED UP IN MY NICE LITTLE BED BY TOMORROW!
DINNA COUNT YE CHICKENS BEFORE THEY'RE HATCHED. WE'VE GOT A LONG WAY TO GO YET, LADDIE.

THEY SPED ON FOR MILE AFTER MILE, KEEPING AWAY FROM THE MAIN ROADS, BUT ALWAYS WITH THE DISTANT SOUNDS OF BATTLE RUMBLING AROUND THEM. SUDDENLY, THEY ROARED ROUND A BEND AND CAME TO A CROSS-ROADS... AND STEVE GULPED AND POINTED...
OH, CORKS...LOOK! JERRIES!
3718

THERE WAS NO ROOM TO TURN AND GO BACK... JOCK STAMPED ON THE ACCELERATOR AND THE ANCIENT TRUCK BOUNDED ACROSS THE ROAD AND SHOT UP THE SIDE ROAD OPPOSITE. HARSH YELLS CAME FROM THE GERMANS AS THEY SAW THE THREE SOLDIERS.

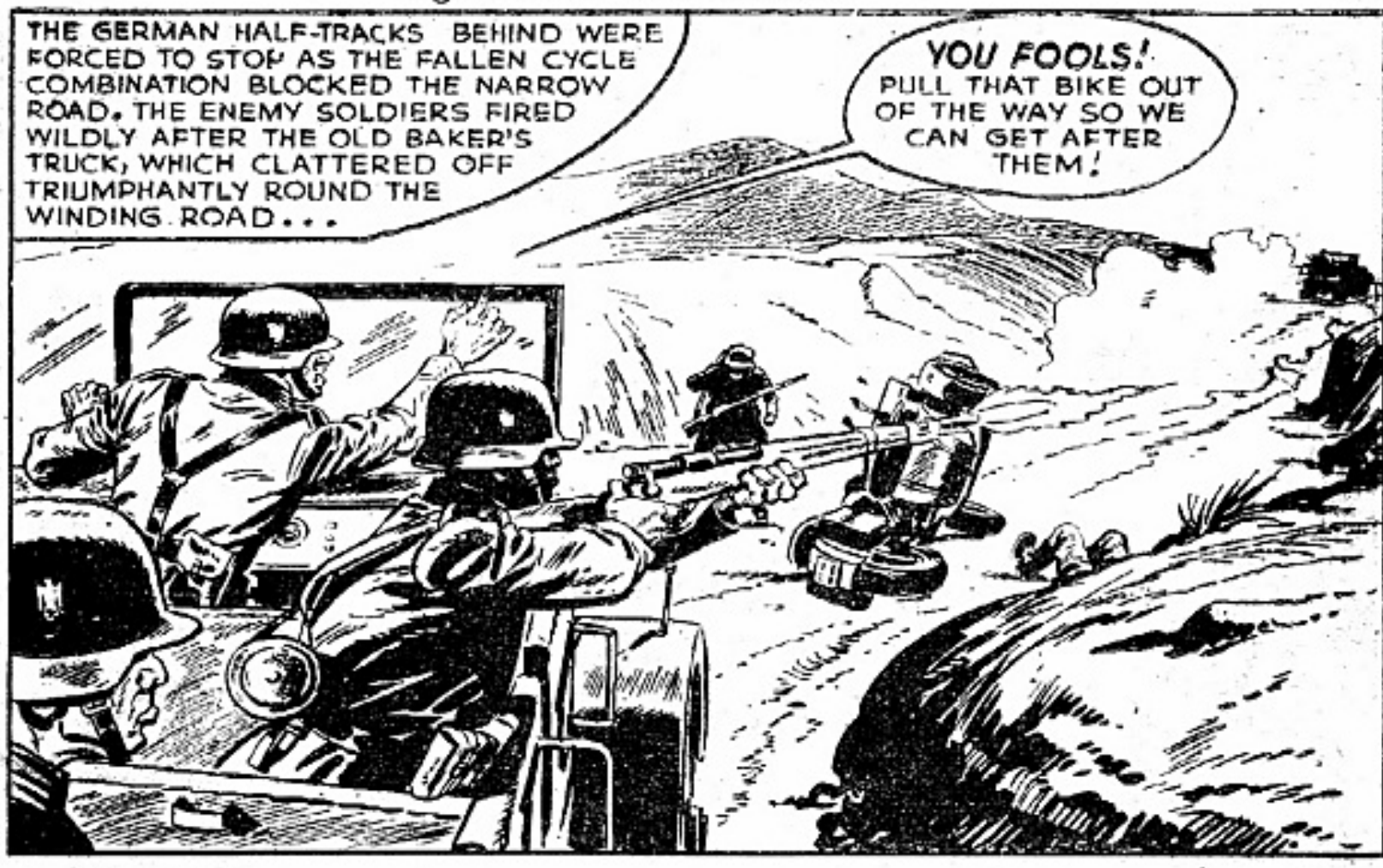
ACHTUNG! BRITISHERS! STOP! YOU ARE OUR PRISONERS! YOU CANNOT ESCAPE!

THAT'S WHAT YOU THINK, MATE! WE'LL HAVE A BLOOMIN' GOOD TRY!

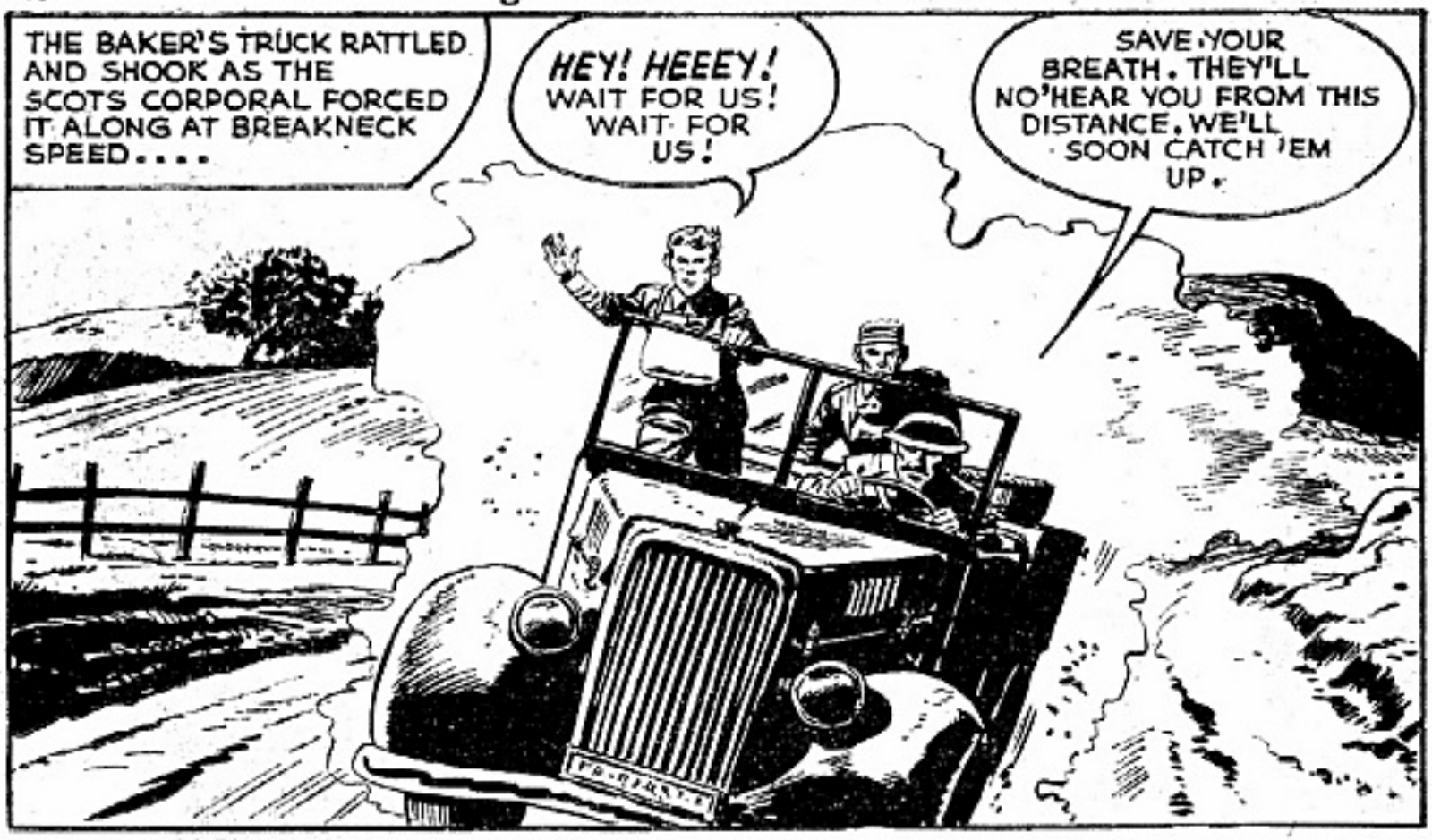
THE HARSH CHATTER OF THE MACHINE GUN WAS FOLLOWED BY A SWIFT ANSWER FROM THE WESSEX SERGEANT... SWINGING THE BREN GUN ROUND, HE POURED A WITHERING FIRE INTO THE MOTOR CYCLE COMBINATION AS IT CAME ROARING AFTER THEM...

HOLD THAT, SQUAREHEADS!

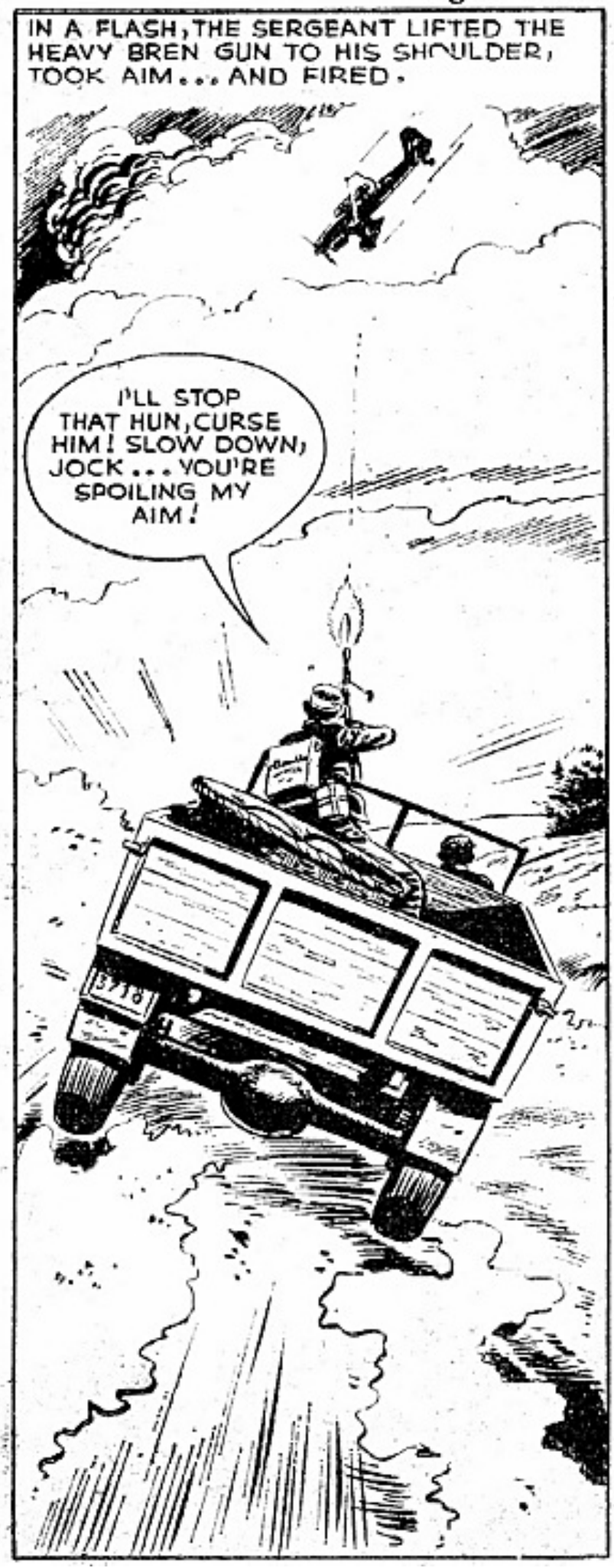
YAAAH!

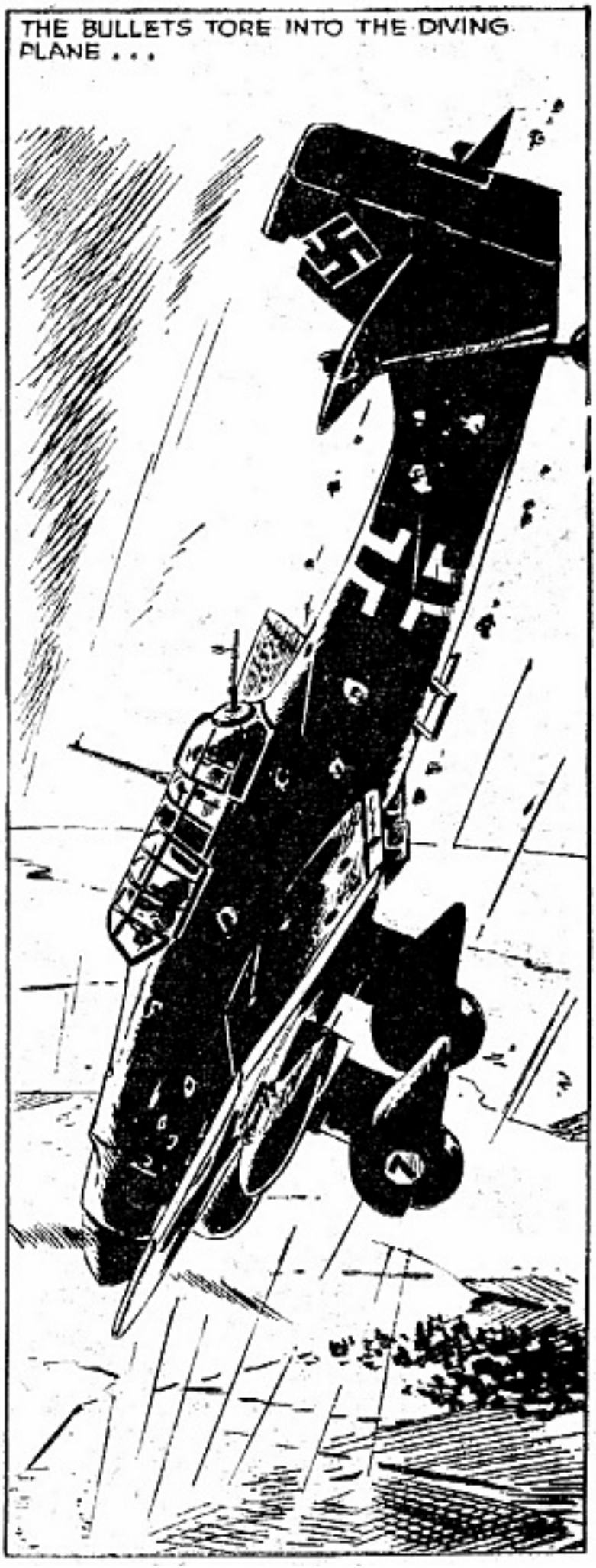

THE GERMAN HALF-TRACKS BEHIND WERE FORCED TO STOP AS THE FALLEN CYCLE COMBINATION BLOCKED THE NARROW ROAD. THE ENEMY SOLDIERS FIRED WILDLY AFTER THE OLD BAKER'S TRUCK, WHICH CLATTERED OFF TRIUMPHANTLY ROUND THE WINDING ROAD...
YOU FOOLS! PULL THAT BIKE OUT OF THE WAY SO WE CAN GET AFTER THEM!

BUT BY THE TIME THE ROAD WAS CLEARED, DAVE AND HIS PALS WERE WELL AWAY, TWISTING AND DODGING DOWN THE NARROW LANES. SUDDENLY STEVE STOOD UP IN THE FRONT AND WAVED EXCITEDLY TOWARDS A ROAD SNAKING OVER A HILL AHEAD OF THEM....
LOOK! ONE OF OUR CONVOYS! WE'VE CAUGHT UP WITH SOME OF OUR BLOKES. STEP ON IT, JOCK!


THE BAKER'S TRUCK RATTLED AND SHOOK AS THE SCOTS CORPORAL FORCED IT ALONG AT BREAKNECK SPEED....
HEY! HEEEY! WAIT FOR US! WAIT FOR US!
SAVE YOUR BREATH. THEY'LL NO'HEAR YOU FROM THIS DISTANCE. WE'LL SOON CATCH 'EM UP.

BUT SUDDENLY THERE WAS A SINISTER WHINE FROM THE SKY...
A STUKA! IT'S GOING TO DIVE-BOMB THE CONVOY!


IN A FLASH, THE SERGEANT LIFTED THE HEAVY BREN GUN TO HIS SHOULDER, TOOK AIM... AND FIRED.
I'LL STOP THAT HUN, CURSE HIM! SLOW DOWN, JOCK... YOU'RE SPOILING MY AIM!


THE BULLETS TORE INTO THE DIVING PLANE...

DAVE GREEN HELD THE PLANE IN HIS SIGHTS AND FIRED HIS REMAINING ROUNDS.. WITH DEADLY ACCURACY!
BINGO! YOU'VE GOT HIM! HE'S ON FIRE!
3718

THE STUKA SEEMED TO HANG IN THE AIR FOR A MOMENT...THEN IT PLUNGED TO EARTH...

THE MIGHTY BLAST OF THE UNRELEASED BOMBS EXPLODING ON THE GERMAN PLANE HURLED THE OLD TRUCK ON ITS SIDE AND THE THREE SOLDIERS WERE FLUNG OUT...
OOOWW!

FOR A FEW SECONDS, THEY LAY WHERE THEY HAD FALLEN, HALF STUNNED. THEN DAVE STAGGERED TO HIS FEET, HIS HEAD THROBBING WITH INTOLERABLE PAIN...
AAAH! MY... MY HEAD...

THEN, ABOVE THE FIERCE ROAR OF THE BURNING PLANE, DAVE HEARD ANOTHER SOUND ALONG THE LANE...
QUICK! LET'S GET OUT OF HERE... HERE COME THE JERRIES IN THEIR HALF-TRACKS!

Chapter 4. THE PANZERS POUNCE

SERGEANT GREEN SNATCHED UP THE BREN GUN AND SHOUTED TO THE OTHER TWO...THEY BURST THROUGH THE HEDGE AND WENT RACING ACROSS THE FIELD ON THE FAR SIDE..
COME ON, RUN FOR IT... ONCE WE'RE IN THAT DIP IN THE GROUND AHEAD, THEY WON'T BE ABLE TO HIT US!
COR! WHAT A CAPER! IF I GET THROUGH THIS LOT ALIVE, I RECKON I'M GOING IN FOR THE NEXT OLYMPIC GAMES!

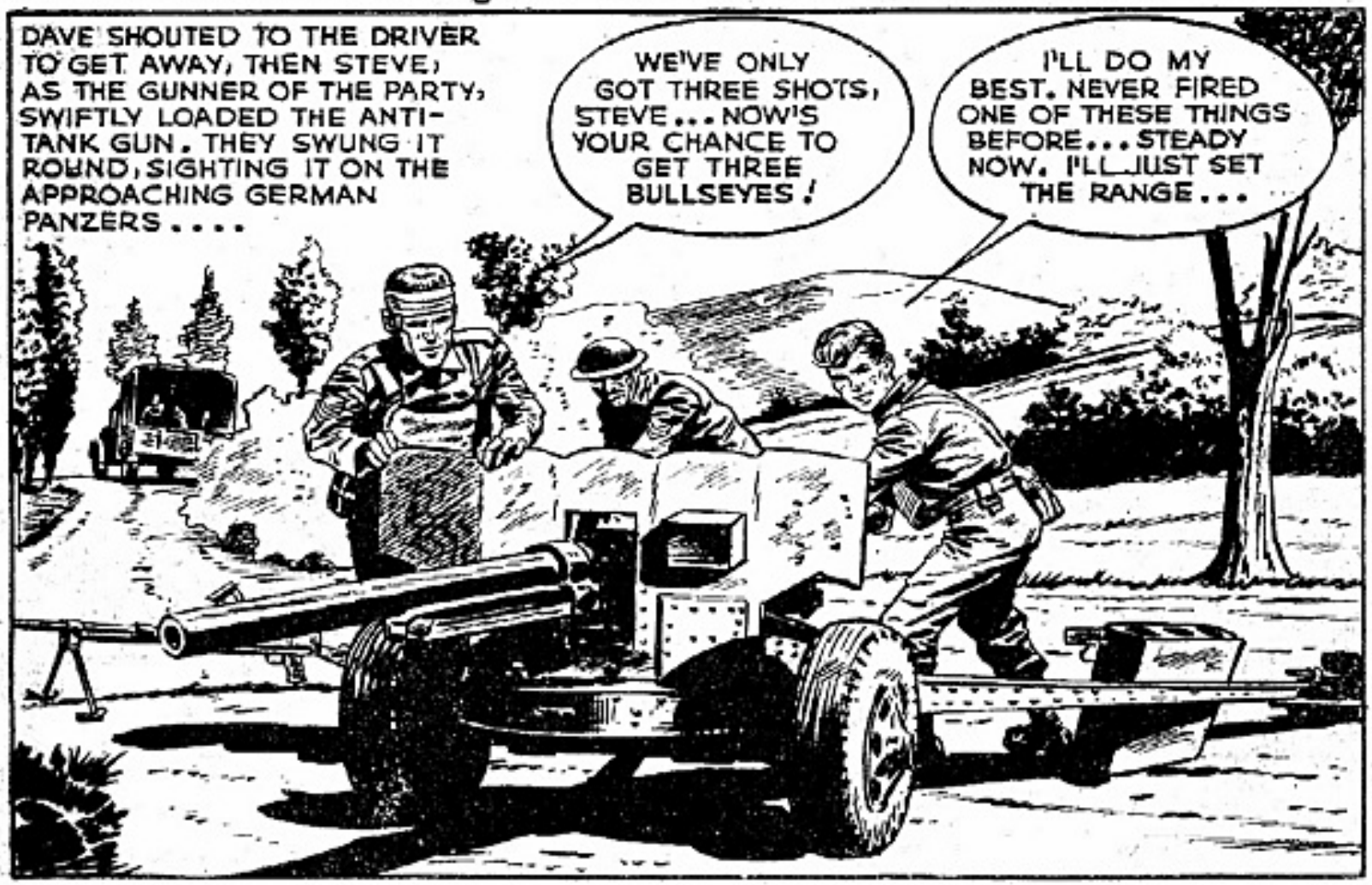
BULLETS WHINED AND ZIPPED ROUND THEM LIKE ANGRY HORNETS AS THEY ZIG-ZAGGED ACROSS THE FIELD ...BUT NONE OF THEM WAS HIT. THEY THREW THEMSELVES INTO THE FOLD IN THE GROUND, CHESTS HEAVING....
I DINNA THINK YON SCUM WILL GIVE CHASE. THEY'RE AFTER BIGGER FISH, YOU KNOW... THE CONVOY!
YOU'RE RIGHT, JOCK. AND IF WE CUT STRAIGHT ACROSS THIS DIP, WE SHOULD JUST CATCH UP WITH THE TAIL END OF THE TRUCKS!

BENDING LOW, THEY RAN FOR IT. AS THEY GOT NEAR TO THE SLOW MOVING CONVOY, THEY SAW THE LAST LORRY WAS SOME WAY BEHIND THE OTHERS. SUDDENLY, THE LITTLE COCKNEY GUNNER GAVE A YELL...
HEY, LOOK, MATES! THAT BACK TRUCK'S GOT AN ANTI-TANK GUN IN TOW.
IF THEY'VE GOT ANY AMMO, THEY OUGHT TO HAVE A SMACK AT THE JERRIES... OTHERWISE THEY'RE GOING TO BE IN TROUBLE WITH A CAPITAL 'T'!

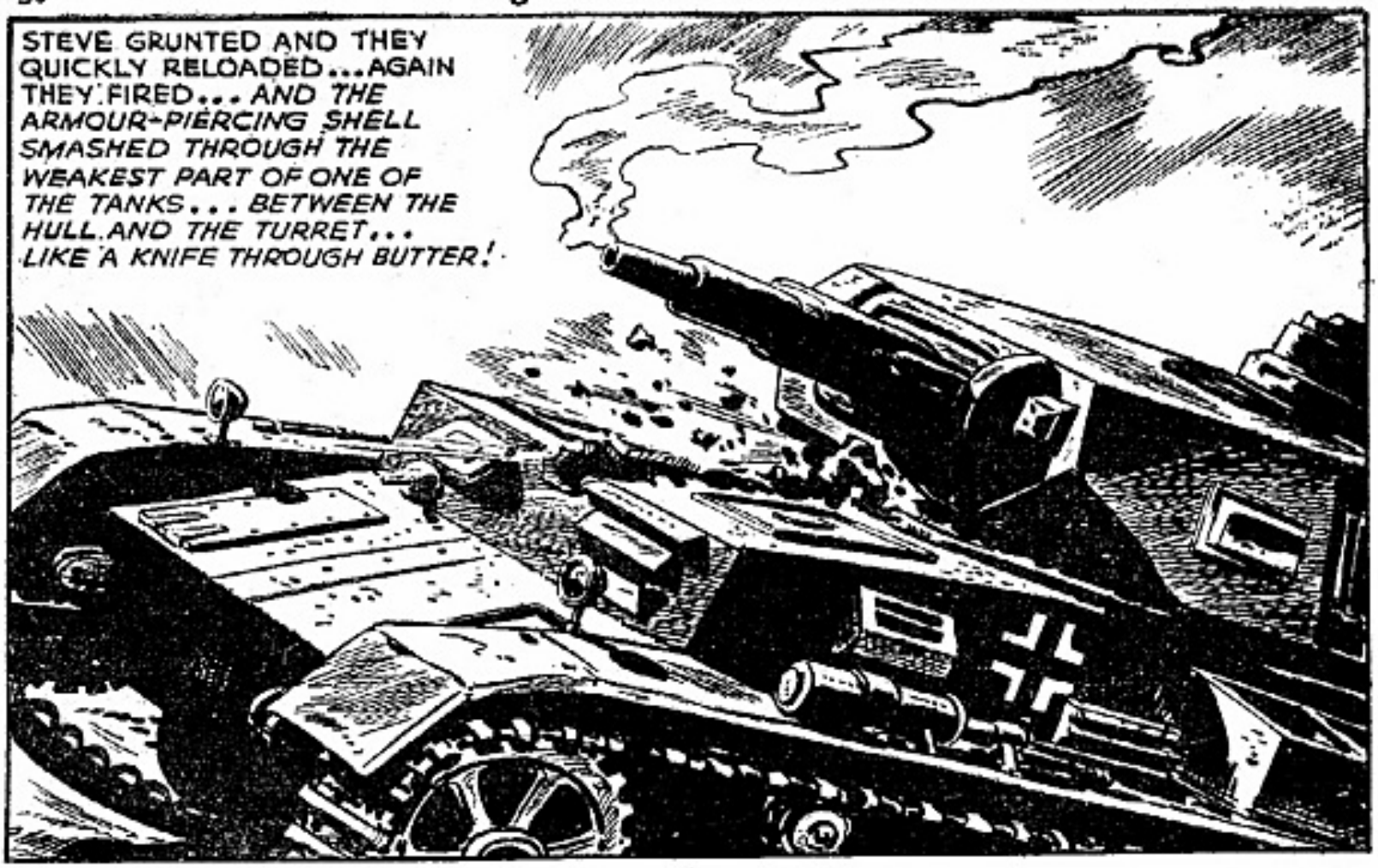
PANTING AND GASPING, THEY DRAGGED THEMSELVES UP THE SIDE OF THE HILL ON TO THE ROAD AND WAVED FRANTICALLY AT THE LORRY. THE BEGRIMED R.A.S.C. DRIVER CLAPPED ON HIS BRAKES...
DRIVER! HAVE YOU GOT ANY SHELLS FOR THAT GUN? IF THOSE JERRIES DOWN THERE AREN'T MADE TO DUCK THEIR HEADS, EVERY TRUCK IN THIS CONVOY IS GOING TO GET PLASTERED.
THERE'S THREE SHELLS IN A BOX IN THE BACK, CHUM. THAT'S ALL! AND I'VE GOT A CARGO OF WOMEN AND KIDS AND TWO WOUNDED OFFICERS. ONE OF THEM MADE ME BRING THE GUN... BUT HE'S UNCONSCIOUS NOW. I HAVEN'T A CLUE HOW TO FIRE IT!

ALL AT ONCE, GERMAN SHELLS SCREAMED THROUGH THE AIR AND BURST WITH SAVAGE EXPLOSIONS ON THE SMALL HILL...

CALLING TO STEVE AND JOCK TO FOLLOW HIM, DAVE GREEN RAN TO THE BACK OF THE LORRY AND THEY QUICKLY SLASHED THE ROPES HOLDING THE GUN. JOCK PULLED THE AMMUNITION BOX OUT OF THE BACK OF THE LORRY.
THERE'S SOME CLIPS OF THREE-O-THREE AMMO HERE TOO, SERGEANT... I'LL HAVE 'EM AS WELL.
FINE! THEY'LL DO FOR THE BREN. I'VE ONLY GOT ONE FULL MAGAZINE LEFT.


DAVE SHOUTED TO THE DRIVER TO GET AWAY, THEN STEVE, AS THE GUNNER OF THE PARTY, SWIFTLY LOADED THE ANTI-TANK GUN. THEY SWUNG IT ROUND, SIGHTING IT ON THE APPROACHING GERMAN PANZERS....
WE'VE ONLY GOT THREE SHOTS, STEVE... NOW'S YOUR CHANCE TO GET THREE BULLSEYES!
I'LL DO MY BEST. NEVER FIRED ONE OF THESE THINGS BEFORE... STEADY NOW. I'LL JUST SET THE RANGE...

A LINE OF GERMAN TANKS HAD COME INTO VIEW NOW AND IT WAS AT ONE OF THESE THAT STEVE AIMED... *THE GUN FIRED WITH A COUGHING ROAR OF FLAME AND SMOKE!*
...BUT THE SHOT WENT WIDE AND PLOUGHED A FURROW BETWEEN TWO TANKS!


STEVE GRUNTED AND THEY QUICKLY RELOADED...AGAIN THEY FIRED... AND THE ARMOUR-PIERCING SHELL SMASHED THROUGH THE WEAKEST PART OF ONE OF THE TANKS... BETWEEN THE HULL AND THE TURRET... LIKE A KNIFE THROUGH BUTTER!

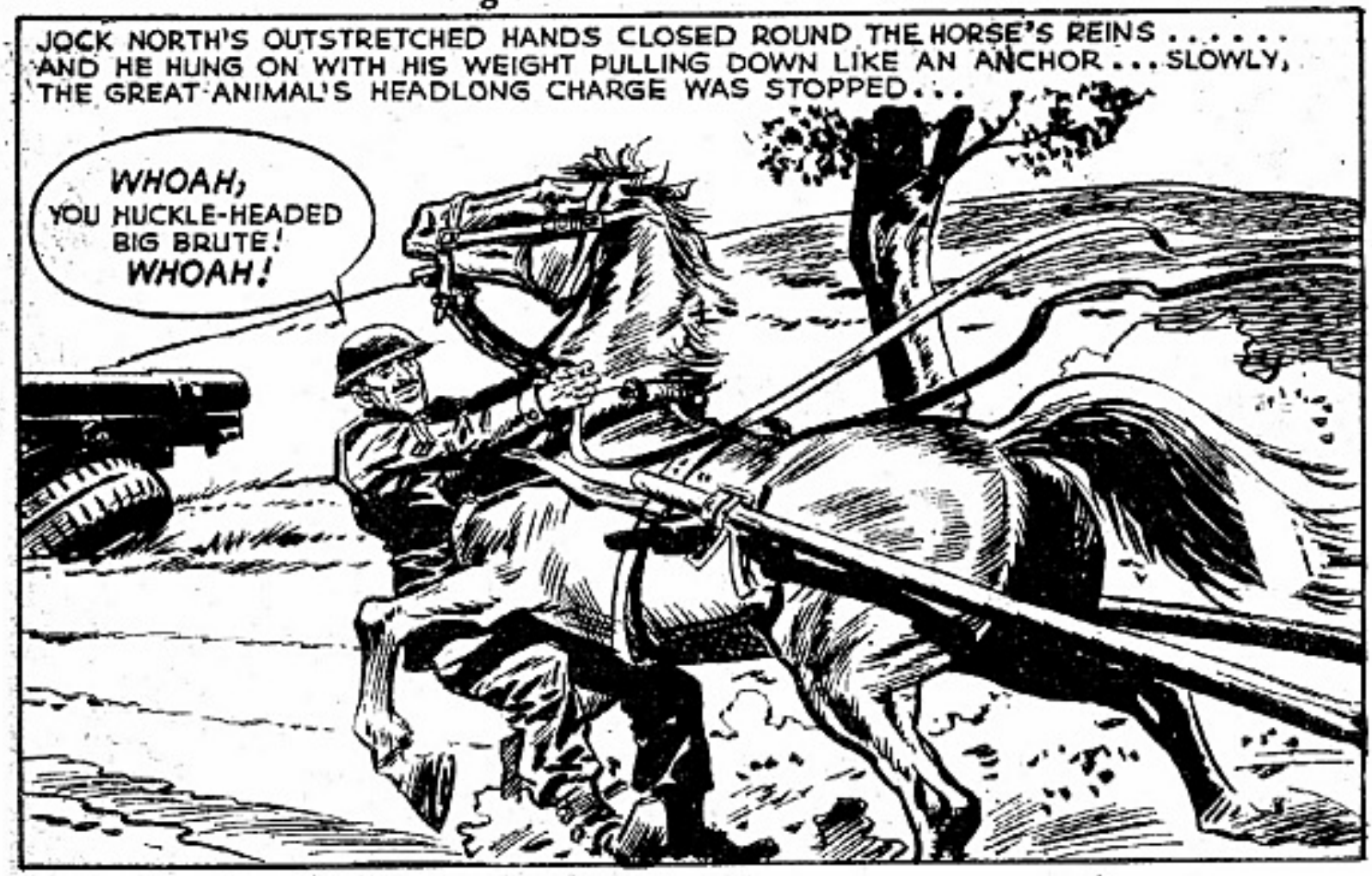
AS THE TANK SLITHERED TO A STANDSTILL, THEY SLAMMED THE LAST SHELL INTO THE BREECH AND JOCK AND DAVE HELD THEIR BREATH AS THE LITTLE GUNNER TOOK AIM AGAIN... WHOOMP!
HOOTS, MON! YOU'VE DONE IT AGAIN!
YAHOO! NICE GOING, STEVE! THAT'S TWO OF THE BLIGHTERS KNOCKED OUT!

UNSURE OF THE STRENGTH OF THE OPPOSITION AHEAD, THE GERMANS HALTED AND THE UNARMOURED VEHICLES SWUNG ROUND AND SPED FOR THE COVER OF THE LANE BEHIND THEM. ON THE HILLSIDE, JOCK TURNED TO SPEAK TO DAVE... JUST IN TIME TO SEE HIM FALL TO THE GROUND!
SERGEANT, WHAT... OCH! HE'S BEEN HIT!

BUT AS HE BENT OVER THE SERGEANT, THE SCOT REALISED THAT DAVE HAD ONLY FAINTED. JOCK YELLED TO STEVE TO COME AND HELP HIM.
THE WEE LADDIE'S OUT FOR THE COUNT... HIS HEAD, I DINNA DOUBT. QUICK... GIVE ME A HAND WITH HIM, STEVE. THIS PLACE ISNA A HEALTHY SPOT TO STAY IN.
POOR OLD SARGE! HANG ON, I'M COMING.

THEY STAGGERED ALONG THE ROAD WITH THEIR LIMP BURDEN AND IN THE DISTANCE THEY HEARD THE FURIOUS SOUNDS OF A HEAVY BATTLE. PLANES WHEELED ACROSS THE SKY AND ALL AT ONCE A NEW SOUND FILLED THEIR EARS... THE DRUMMING OF HOOVES ON THE ROAD AHEAD.
LOOK OUT, JOCK... THERE'S A NAG COMING DOWN THE ROAD TOWARDS US— QUICK... GET OUT OF THE WAY!

DRAGGING THE SHATTERED REMAINS OF TWO CART SHAFTS BEHIND HIM, THE TERRIFIED HORSE CAME THUNDERING TOWARDS THEM. IN A FLASH, JOCK SWUNG SIDEWAYS AND LOWERED THE UNCONSCIOUS SERGEANT TO THE GROUND. THEN THE TALL SCOT FLUNG HIMSELF AT THE HORSE'S HEAD!


JOCK NORTH'S OUTSTRETCHED HANDS CLOSED ROUND THE HORSE'S REINS ..... AND HE HUNG ON WITH HIS WEIGHT PULLING DOWN LIKE AN ANCHOR ... SLOWLY, THE GREAT ANIMAL'S HEADLONG CHARGE WAS STOPPED...
WHOAH, YOU HUCKLE-HEADED BIG BRUTE! WHOAH!

FOAM-FLECKED AND LATHERED, THE CART HORSE CAME TO A SLITHERING HALT. JOCK SPOKE SOOTHINGLY TO THE SCARED ANIMAL AS IT STOOD TREMBLING IN EVERY LIMB. THEN THE CORPORAL TURNED IT ROUND AND LED IT BACK TO STEVE, WHO WAS WATCHING WIDE-EYED!
LUMMY, CORP! DIDN'T KNOW YOU'D BEEN A COWBOY!
OCH, STOP YOUR BLATHERING! I DIDN'T DO THIS FOR FUN... SEE YON BURNED-OUT CAR? I'VE GOT AN IDEA....

A WRECKED FRENCH STAFF CAR LAY AT THE SIDE OF THE ROAD AND JOCK LED THE HORSE ROUND TO THE FRONT AND STRAPPED THE BROKEN CART-SHAFTS TO THE REMAINS OF THE BONNET. WHEN DAVE GREEN CAME-TO TEN MINUTES LATER, HE LOOKED AROUND HIM IN STARTLED SURPRISE.
WHAT... WHAT... WHERE ARE WE?
HULLO, SARGE OLD CHUM! HOW'RE YOU FEELING? WE GOT FED UP WITH CARRYING YOU... SO WE'VE HIRED A ONE HORSE-POWER TAXI. NOT BAD, EH? ANY OLD IRON? ANY OLD IRON?

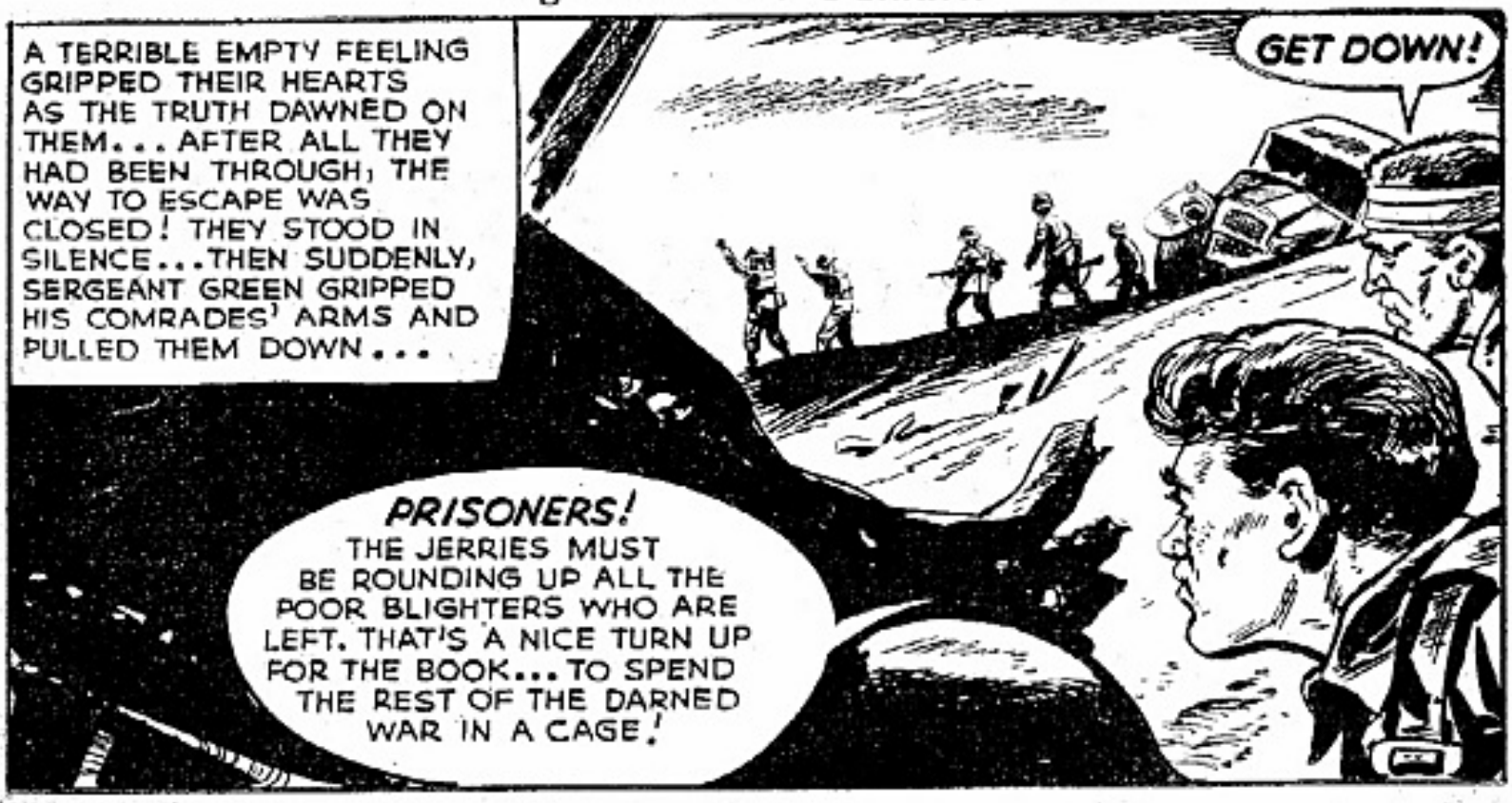
FOR MILE AFTER MILE THEY WENDED THEIR WAY THROUGH THE TRAGIC REMAINS OF THE WITHDRAWING BRITISH FORCES... THEN AHEAD OF THEM THEY SAW A MIGHTY PALL OF GREASY BLACK SMOKE, RISING HIGH INTO THE BLUE HEAVENS...
LOOK AT THAT! WHAT'S GOING ON?
UNLESS I'M MISTAKEN, THAT'S DUNKIRK. OUR BLOKES MUST HAVE REACHED THERE AND THAT SMOKE'S FROM THE BURNING STUFF THEY'RE FORCED TO LEAVE BEHIND 'EM.
YOU MEAN THEY'RE PULLING OUT, SERGEANT? AYE, I'M THINKING YOU'RE RIGHT. THEN IT'S DUNKIRK WE'LL HAVE TO MAKE FOR.

AS THEY LOOKED AT THE GRIM SMOKE CLOUD, THERE CAME THE SCREECHING WHINE OF AEROPLANE ENGINES... AND DOWN FROM THE SKY HURTLED THREE SINISTER BLACK-CROSSED MESSERSCHMITTS, GUNS FLAMING...
JERRIES! INTO THE DITCHES!
I DON'T NEED TELLING, MATE!

SAVAGELY, THE THREE GERMAN FIGHTERS MACHINE-GUNNED THE ROAD AND THE HORSE GAVE A NEIGH OF TERROR... WITH A MIGHTY KICK, IT LASHED OUT AND TORE ITSELF FREE FROM THE SHAFTS...
OCH, PUIR BEASTIE! HE'S SCARED OUT OF HIS WITS. WE MIGHT HAVE KNOWN THIS WOULD HAPPEN... WE SHOULDNA' HAVE BROUGHT HIM.
THE OLD FELLER'S DONE US A GOOD TURN, JOCK. LET'S HOPE HE GETS AWAY WITHOUT BEING HURT.

THE ENEMY PLANES ZOOMED UP AND AWAY. DAVE INSISTED THAT HE COULD WALK AND SO THEY SET OFF AGAIN. THEY CROSSED THE LAST RIVER TO THE COAST, THE YSER, AND NEXT MORNING, FOOTSORE AND WEARY, THEY ENTERED THE BATTERED AND BOMBED RUINS OF DUNKIRK...
OUCH! MY FEET ARE KILLING ME! IS IT MUCH FURTHER, SARGE?
I DON'T THINK SO, STEVE. BUT WHAT WE'LL FIND WHEN WE GET THERE, I'D HATE TO GUESS. THERE'S NO SIGN OF ANY REARGUARD...

Chapter 5. LAST BOAT TO SAFETY


A TERRIBLE EMPTY FEELING GRIPPED THEIR HEARTS AS THE TRUTH DAWNED ON THEM... AFTER ALL THEY HAD BEEN THROUGH, THE WAY TO ESCAPE WAS CLOSED! THEY STOOD IN SILENCE...THEN SUDDENLY, SERGEANT GREEN GRIPPED HIS COMRADES' ARMS AND PULLED THEM DOWN...
GET DOWN!
PRISONERS! THE JERRIES MUST BE ROUNDING UP ALL THE POOR BLIGHTERS WHO ARE LEFT. THAT'S A NICE TURN UP FOR THE BOOK... TO SPEND THE REST OF THE DARNED WAR IN A CAGE!

PRISON IS NOT FOR THE LIKES OF US, MON... I DINNA RATE MY LIFE VERY HIGH, BUT I'LL SELL IT DEAR BEFORE I ROT BEHIND BARBED WIRE! HOW SAY YOU... DAVE... STEVE?
I'M WITH YOU, JOCK. ALL OR NOTHING. WE'RE NOT BEAT YET!
NOT 'ARF, BLOKES! WE'VE HAD A RIPE ROUGH DO SO FAR... BUT THIS AIN'T THE END, NOT BY A LONG CHALK!

THERE WAS A BOMBED CAFE JUST ALONG THE BEACH AND THE THREE COMRADES HID UNDER THE DEBRIS OF THE KITCHEN UNTIL THE GERMANS HAD FINISHED SEARCHING THE AREA... FOR TWO DAYS AND NIGHTS THE SOLDIERS HID THERE, WELL SUPPLIED WITH FOOD; BUT NOT DARING TO VENTURE OUT... THEN, JUST AFTER DAWN ON THE THIRD DAY...
HERE... LOOK, YOU TWO. THERE'S A MOTOR BOAT DOWN THERE. OBVIOUSLY HAD A BASHING... BUT IT'S STILL AFLOAT. I WONDER...?

AFTER MAKING SURE THERE WERE NO GERMANS ABOUT, THEY CREPT DOWN THE BEACH TO THE LAUNCH, WHICH WAS WALLOWING GENTLY IN THE SHALLOWS.

THERE'S WATER SLOPPING ABOUT IN THE MOTOR. BUT IF I CAN GET THE PLUGS OUT AND DRY 'EM, I MAY BE ABLE TO GET IT STARTED. SEE IF YOU CAN FIND SOME TOOLS, JOCK.

THE BIGGEST HOLE IS THIS ONE IN HER SIDE. I RECKON IT COULD BE PLUGGED.

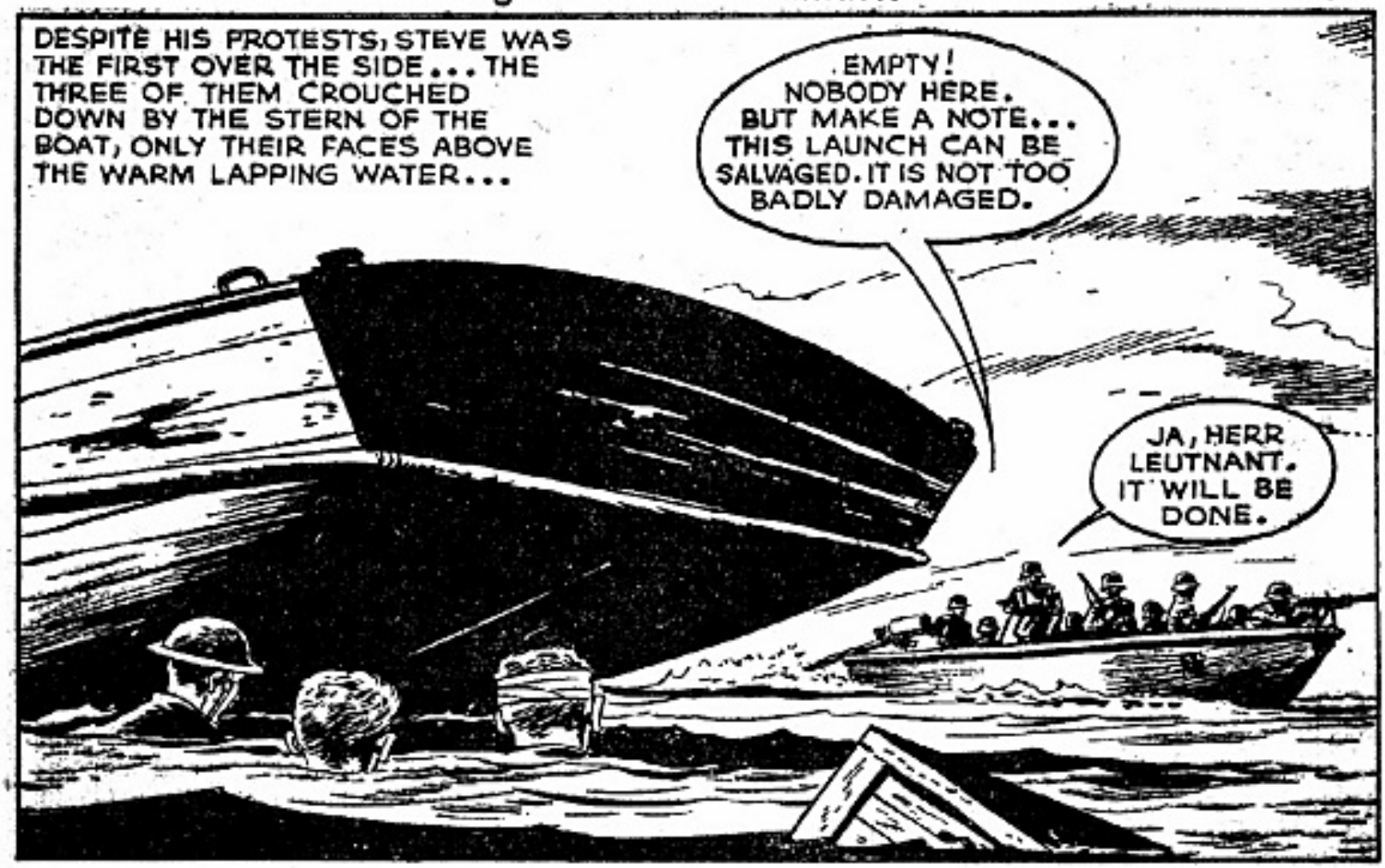
WITH ONE ON GUARD AND TWO WORKING, THEY KEPT AT IT ALL THAT DAY. THE HOLES IN THE LAUNCH DID NOT TAKE LONG TO FILL UP, BUT THE ENGINE WAS IN A TERRIBLE MESS. STEVE CANNON MUTTERED AND CURSED AS HE STRUGGLED WITH IT.

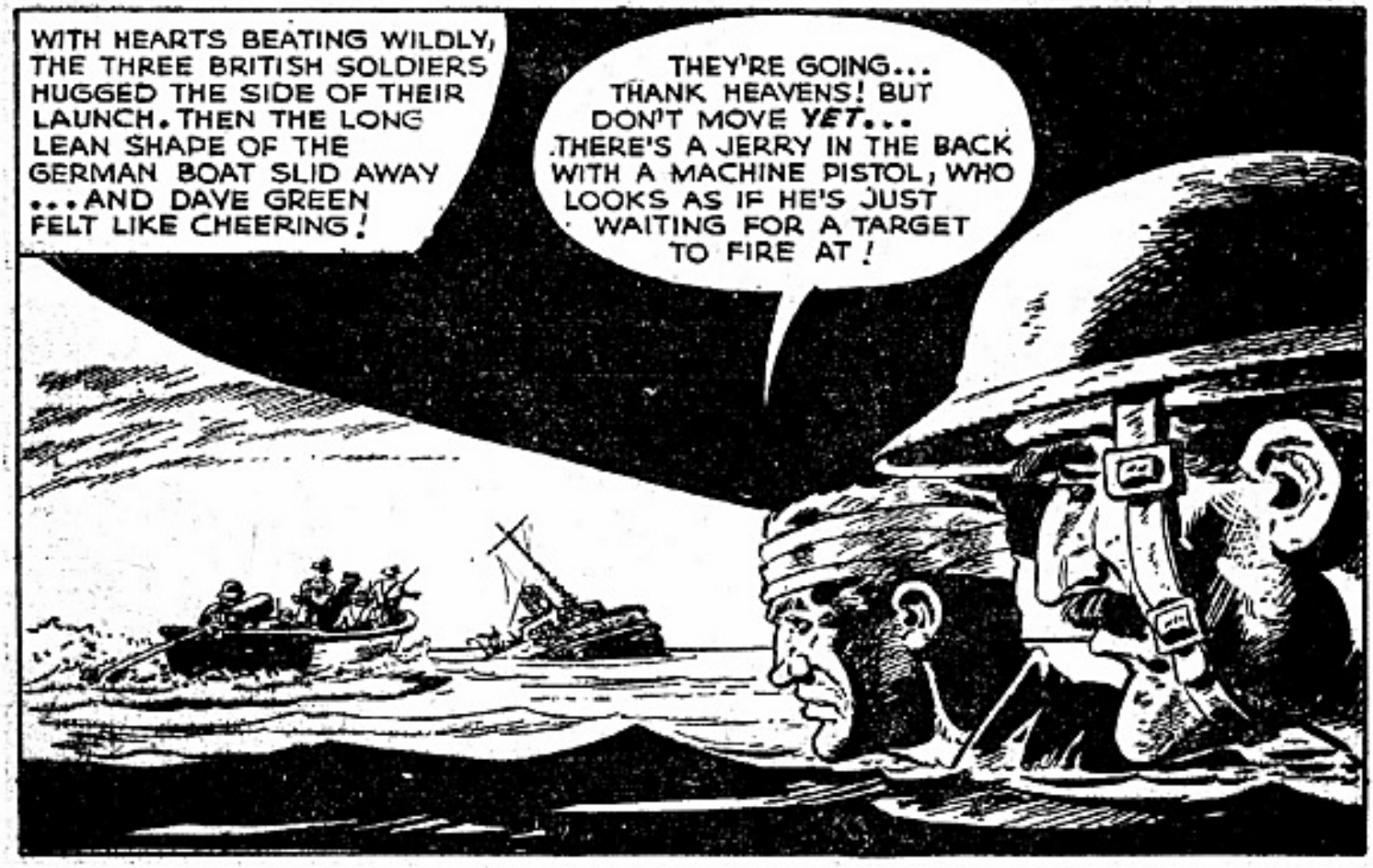
ANY LUCK, CHUM?

BLOOMIN' HEAP O' JUNK! COR! THIS IS A PROPER SCRAP HEAP, SARGE. THERE'S PLENTY OF JUICE... IF ONLY I CAN GET THE DARNED THING GOING!

IT WAS AROUND FOUR O'CLOCK WHEN THE SERGEANT, WHO WAS LYING ON DECK WATCHING THE BEACH, GAVE A SHARP WHISTLE AND HISSED DOWN TO THE LITTLE GUNNER AND JOCK NORTH:

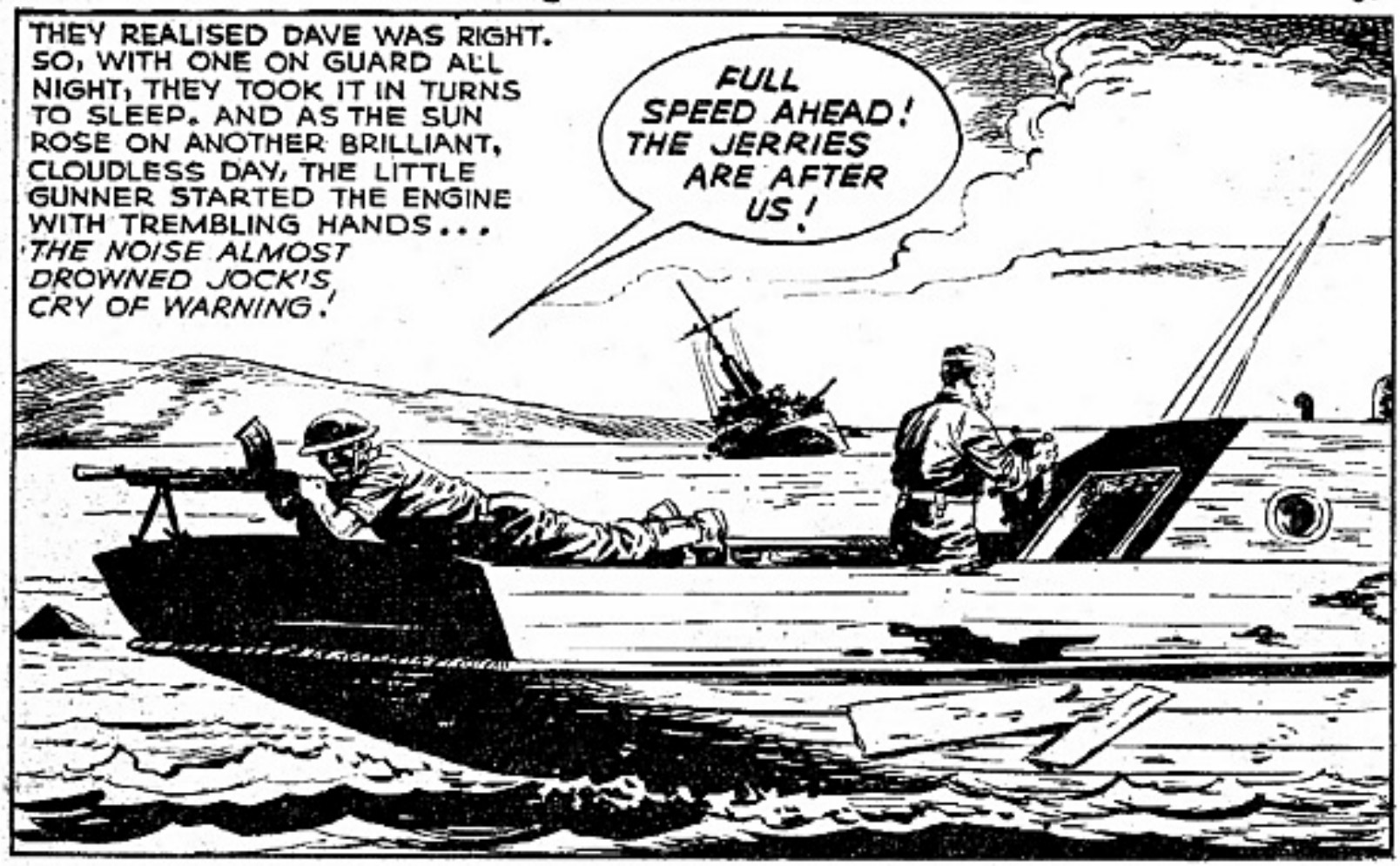
QUICK...OVER THE SIDE AND INTO THE WATER! THERE'S A BOATLOAD OF ARMED JERRIES COMING THIS WAY FROM THE HARBOUR!


DESPITE HIS PROTESTS, STEVE WAS THE FIRST OVER THE SIDE... THE THREE OF THEM CROUCHED DOWN BY THE STERN OF THE BOAT, ONLY THEIR FACES ABOVE THE WARM LAPPING WATER...
EMPTY! NOBODY HERE. BUT MAKE A NOTE... THIS LAUNCH CAN BE SALVAGED. IT IS NOT TOO BADLY DAMAGED.
JA, HERR LEUTNANT. IT WILL BE DONE.


WITH HEARTS BEATING WILDLY, THE THREE BRITISH SOLDIERS HUGGED THE SIDE OF THEIR LAUNCH. THEN THE LONG LEAN SHAPE OF THE GERMAN BOAT SLID AWAY ...AND DAVE GREEN FELT LIKE CHEERING!
THEY'RE GOING... THANK HEAVENS! BUT DON'T MOVE YET... THERE'S A JERRY IN THE BACK WITH A MACHINE PISTOL, WHO LOOKS AS IF HE'S JUST WAITING FOR A TARGET TO FIRE AT!

THEY CROUCHED IN THE WATER FOR OVER AN HOUR, UNTIL THE GERMANS HAD VANISHED FROM SIGHT. THEN THE THREE OF THEM CLIMBED INBOARD AGAIN AND STEVE WRESTLED AFRESH WITH THE BOAT'S ENGINE. NIGHT WAS CLOSING IN WHEN HE LOOKED UP AND GRINNED...
HOLD TIGHT, GENTS...KEEP YOUR FINGERS CROSSED... THERE! GOT IT! IT'S GOING!
WELL DONE, STEVE...THAT'S MORE THAN I COULD HAVE MANAGED.
YOU'RE A GUID WEE SASSENACH, STEVIE! AYE, YOU ARE THAT!

STEVE AND THE SCOTS CORPORAL WERE ALL FOR SETTING COURSE FOR ENGLAND RIGHT AWAY. BUT SERGEANT GREEN STOPPED THEM.
OKAY, SO THE BOAT'S FIXED AND THE ENGINE'S FINE... BUT WHAT ABOUT ALL THE WRECKS OUT THERE? AND FLOATING MINES AND OTHER JUNK? WE'D BE HOLED BEFORE WE'D GONE A MILE IN THE DARK. NO! SWITCH HER OFF, STEVE...WE'LL SAIL AT DAWN...AND THAT'S AN ORDER, WHETHER YOU LIKE IT OR NOT!


THEY REALISED DAVE WAS RIGHT. SO, WITH ONE ON GUARD ALL NIGHT, THEY TOOK IT IN TURNS TO SLEEP. AND AS THE SUN ROSE ON ANOTHER BRILLIANT, CLOUDLESS DAY, THE LITTLE GUNNER STARTED THE ENGINE WITH TREMBLING HANDS... *THE NOISE ALMOST DROWNED JOCK'S CRY OF WARNING!*
FULL SPEED AHEAD! THE JERRIES ARE AFTER US!

A FUSILLADE OF SHOTS WHINED AROUND THE BOAT, SOME SMASHING THROUGH THE THIN SIDES. LUCKILY, DAVE HAD SLIPPED ASHORE DURING THE NIGHT AND FOUND SIX FULL BREN MAGAZINES FROM THE LITTER ON THE BEACH. *JOCK USED THEM WITH DEADLY EFFECT!*
LET 'EM HAVE THE LOT, MATE! NICE SHOOTIN'!
DON'T WASTE THE AMMO THOUGH, JOCK... WE MAY NEED TO DEFEND OURSELVES ON THE WAY HOME.

BEFORE JOCK NORTH COULD REPLY, HE GAVE A GROAN AND ROLLED SIDEWAYS...
AAAGH!
STEVE! HE'S BEEN SHOT... GRAB HIM!

STEVE THREW HIMSELF FORWARD AND GRABBED JOCK'S LEGS . . . JUST AS THE TALL SCOT WAS ABOUT TO SLIDE OVER THE SIDE OF THE BOAT .
COME BACK, STOOPID... IT AINIT BARF NIGHT!

STEVE CANNON'S PROMPT ACTION SAVED JOCK FROM A WATERY GRAVE. HE DRAGGED THE CORPORAL BACK INTO THE COCKPIT OF THE BOAT AND TOOK THE HELM, WHILST DAVE TENDED THE WOUND IN JOCK'S SHOULDER... WAVES OF SEARING PAIN SWEPT OVER THE WEARY SOLDIER, BUT HE GRITTED HIS TEETH AND SAT THERE WHITE-FACED.

SORRY IF I'VE HURT YOU, JOCK... BUT I RECKON THAT'LL BE ALL RIGHT UNTIL YOU SEE A DOC. THE BULLET WENT RIGHT THROUGH. HOW'S THAT?

FINE, DAVE. OCH, YOU OUGHT TO HAVE BEEN A MEDICO YESELF!

IT WAS NOON WHEN THE WELCOMING WHITE CLIFFS OF DOVER LOOMED AHEAD OF THE BATTERED LITTLE LAUNCH. THE THREE TIRED AND GRIMY SOLDIERS DID NOT CHEER... THEIR THROATS WERE TOO CHOKED WITH THE EMOTION OF SEEING ENGLAND AGAIN...

WELL, THERE'S HOME, BOYS. ANOTHER HALF AN HOUR AND WE'LL BE STEPPING OUT ON DRY LAND.

Printed in England by Messrs. Percy Brothers Ltd., Manchester 1, and published on the third Thursday in each month by The Amalgamated Press, Ltd., The Fleetway House, Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4. Advertisement Offices: Tallis House, Tallis Street, London, E.C.4. Sole Agents: Australasia, Messrs. Gordon & Gotch, Ltd.; South Africa, Central News Agency, Ltd.; Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland, Messrs. Kingstons, Ltd. WAR PICTURE LIBRARY is sold subject to the following conditions, that it shall not, without the written consent of the Publishers first given, be lent, resold, hired out or otherwise disposed of by way of Trade except at the full retail price as shown on the cover; and that it shall not be lent, resold, hired out or otherwise disposed of in a mutilated condition, or in any unauthorised cover by way of Trade; or affixed to or as part of any publication or advertising, literary or pictorial matter whatsoever.
18.9.58.

WAR PICTURE LIBRARY

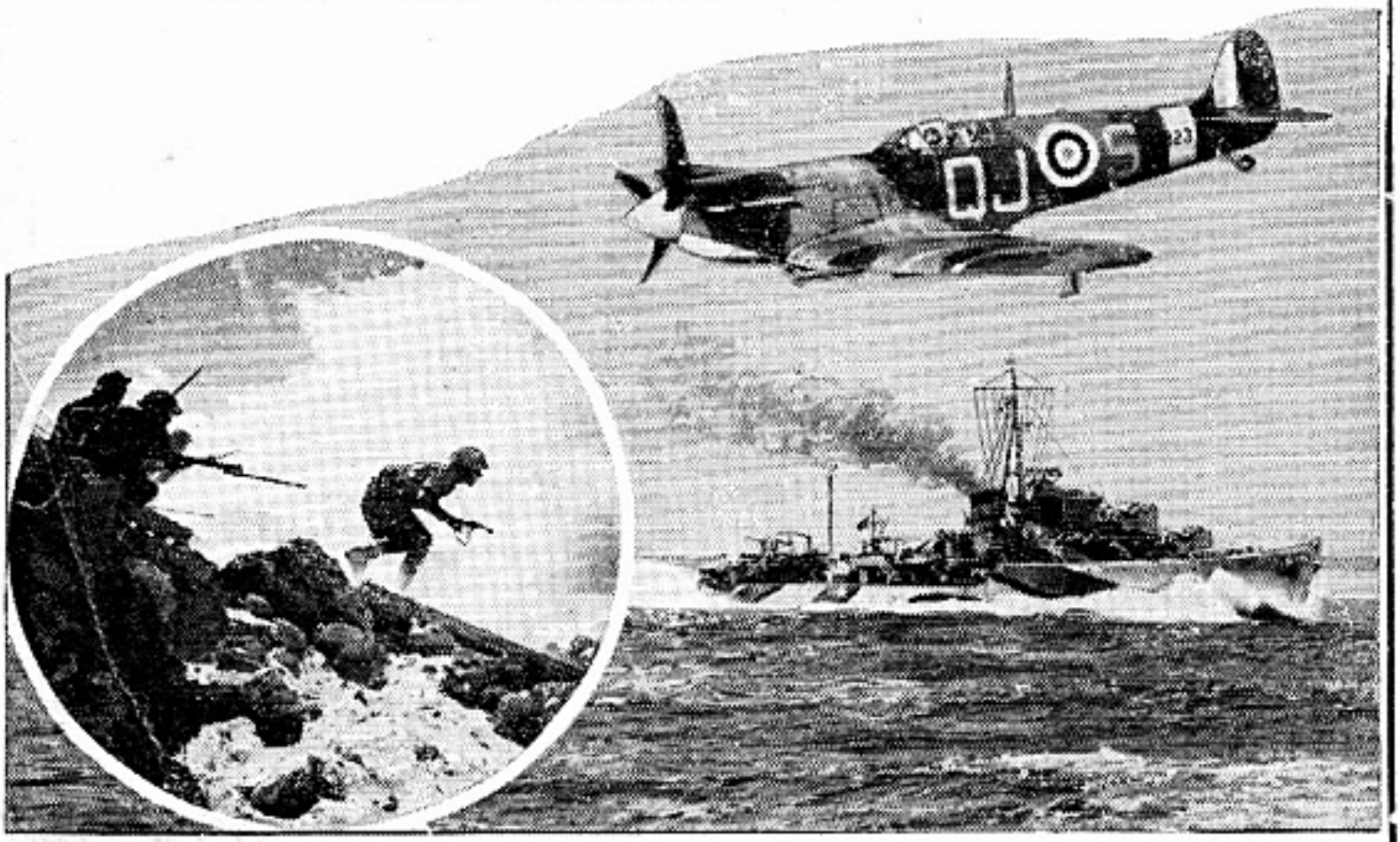
***Next month—and every month**—there will be two issues of this grand new picture library.*

ACTION! DRAMA! EXCITEMENT!

Next month's two thrill-packed numbers of **WAR PICTURE LIBRARY**, which will be on sale Monday, 20th October, are:

No. 3 ACTION STATIONS.

No. 4 THE GALLANT FEW.



SADDLE UP!
FOR
THE GOLDEN WEST!

And Ride With

BILLY THE KID,
BUFFALO BILL,
WILD BILL HICKOK

and other great fighters of the frontier in :—

BILLY THE KID Book of Picture Stories, 1959

ORDER YOUR COPY NOW! PRICE 7/6

COME ADVENTURING
IN
SHERWOOD FOREST!

With
ROBIN HOOD
And His
MERRIE MEN

All the glory and romance of the famous outlaw's fight for freedom are here for you in the pages of—

ROBIN HOOD ANNUAL

ON SALE NOW—PRICE 7/6